4015L

National Library of Canada | Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

CANADIAN THESES ON MICROFICHE | ***THÈSES CANADIENNES SUR MICROFICHE***

NAME OF AUTHOR/*NOM DE L'AUTEUR* BARBARA ELAINE DUFFUS

TITLE OF THESIS/*TITRE DE LA THÈSE* THE IDEA OF LIVING DEATH IN SOREL'S FRANCION

UNIVERSITY/*UNIVERSITÉ* UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

DEGREE FOR WHICH THESIS WAS PRESENTED/ *GRADE POUR LEQUEL CETTE THÈSE FUT PRÉSENTÉE* MASTER OF ARTS

YEAR THIS DEGREE CONFERRED/*ANNÉE D'OBTENTION DE CE GRADE* 1978

NAME OF SUPERVISOR/*NOM DU DIRECTEUR DE THÈSE* DR MICHEL BARÉAU

Permission is hereby granted to the NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA to microfilm this thesis and to lend or sell copies of the film.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

L'autorisation est, par la présente, accordée à la BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DU CANADA de microfilmer cette thèse et de prêter ou de vendre des exemplaires du film.

L'auteur se réserve les autres droits de publication; ni la thèse ni de longs extraits de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans l'autorisation écrite de l'auteur.

DATED/*DATÉ* SEPT. 20, 1978 SIGNED/*SIGNÉ* Barbara Duffus

PERMANENT ADDRESS/*RÉSIDENCE FIXÉ* 77 MARGARET AVENUE
WALLACEBURG ONTARIO
N8A 1Z8

NL-91 (3-74)

National Library of Canada

Cataloguing Branch
Canadian Theses Division

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

Direction du catalogage
Division des thèses canadiennes

NOTICE

The quality of this microfiche is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us a poor photocopy.

Previously copyrighted materials (journal articles, published tests, etc.) are not filmed.

Reproduction in full or in part of this film is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30. Please read the authorization forms which accompany this thesis.

THIS DISSERTATION
HAS BEEN MICROFILMED
EXACTLY AS RECEIVED

AVIS

La qualité de cette microfiche dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de mauvaise qualité.

Les documents qui font déjà l'objet d'un droit d'auteur (articles de revue, examens publiés, etc.) ne sont pas microfilmés.

La reproduction, même partielle, de ce microfilm est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30. Veuillez prendre connaissance des formules d'autorisation qui accompagnent cette thèse.

LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ
MICROFILMÉE TELLE QUE
NOUS L'AVONS REÇUE

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE IDEA OF LIVING DEATH IN SOREL S FRANCION

by

(C) BARBARA E. DUFFUS

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ROMANCE LANGUAGES

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1978

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled THE IDEA OF LIVING DEATH IN SOREL'S FRANCION

submitted by BARBARA E. DUFFUS

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, in French Literature.

Michel Barsacq
.....
Supervisor

.....

.....

Date August 30th, 1978.

A la Memoria

de

Felix Sabrnil Arranz

ABSTRACT

Charles Sorel's Francion is a lengthy but interesting novel of the early seventeenth century. It deals with all sorts of social and philosophical issues, but one of the central themes is death, and its mask, old age. Sorel was very conscious of the reality of aging, illness and death and he integrated these aspects of life into his book. He sees death as an unfortunate reality, but the Living Death of old age, with its physical and mental degeneration is viewed with horror, and constitutes a primary theme in the novel.

In the Francion, older people find very little to enjoy in their lives, and young people are very aware of this. Therefore, they choose to enjoy their lives at the present moment instead of waiting for the promised (but unproven) rewards of an afterlife. They want to get the most pleasure and a variety of experiences from each day of their existence.

Because the old have lost so many of the qualities (strength, beauty and mental capacity) that characterize youth, which is idealized in many ways, they are often scorned by others and seen as useless members of society. The exception to this degeneration of the aged is Agathe, the aged procurer. Her secret for retaining some aspects of youth (i.e. she is mentally alert, but her appearance has deteriorated) is her constant contact with the young and her

role in their world.

Francion himself can accept the inevitability of his own and others' deaths with equanimity, but fears suffering through debilitating old age. He chooses to live a quasi-libertine, very independent existence.

The points of view Sorel expresses in the novel, particularily on the all-encompassing themes of life and death, are of interest not only with relation to early seventeenth-century French literature, but also as a commentary on the contemporary way of life in France, since Sorel was a keen observer and critic of society.

In order to situate the Francion in Charles Sorel's life and to help the reader understand it, I include a short study of Sorel's other works and accomplishments, as well as a chapter on the literary styles which influenced the novel. I also include an annotated bibliography of works concerning Sorel to supplement other such references now available.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the guidance and patience of my advisor, Dr. Michel Bareau, who did much to make the completion of this thesis a reality.

I am also grateful to Dr. Petra Hammer, who introduced me to computer assisted text editing.

This thesis was formatted using the text editing capacities of the University of Alberta Amdahl 470V/6 computer and the Michigan Terminal System program.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
1. A Survey of the Life and Works of Charles Sorel	1
2. Libertine Currents in France and the *Francion*	41
3. The Influence of Several Literary Styles on the *Francion*	65
4. Francion's Heroic Ideal and the Image of Youth	81
5. Life and Death in Francion's Philosophy	95
6. Death Without Masks	107
7. The Living Death	122
8. Conclusions	150
9. Annotated Bibliography	155
Works Not Included in Knystautas' Bibliography	157
Works Published Since Knystautas' Thesis (1973)	172

TABLE OF CONTENTS continued

10. Bibliography 200

Works by Sorel Which were Consulted 200

Works of Criticism of L'Histoire comique de Francion Which were Consulted 203

Other References Concerning Sorel and His Works which were Consulted 206

Other References Consulted 209

Editions of L'Histoire comique de Francion ..214

Chapter 1

A Survey of The Works of Charles Sorel

Charles Sorel was a prolific writer in seventeenth century France. He was little known in his own time, in part because he often wrote anonymously or under pseudonyms,[1] but his works are beginning to excite scholarly interest. Although there was virtually no criticism of Sorel's work until the mid-nineteenth century,[2] he is beginning to be recognized as a significant author, since classicism is no longer seen as the sole literary school of importance in seventeenth century French literature.

Victor Fournel recognized one part of Sorel's importance in his study entitled La littérature indépendante et les écrivains oubliés when he wrote:

---

[1] These included the following: Nicolas de Moulinet, sieur du Parc; Jean de Lalande; Mr. de L'Isle; Alcidon; Tyrène; le chevalier Rozandre.

[2] Beverly Sue Knystautas, "Charles Sorel: An Inventory, Etat Présent and Appraisal", Diss. University of Connecticut 1973, p. 140.

> Parmi tous les auteurs de romans satiriques et bourgeois, Charles Sorel est celui qui a laissé les pages, sinon les plus remarquables, du moins les plus nombreuses, et peut-être les plus originales, après celles de Cyrano, qu'il n'a été donné à personne de surpasser en ce point. [3]

It is a fact that Sorel produced an astounding volume of writing in his lifetime. Although critics still argue over exactly which works are his, it appears that he produced over sixty of them, varying in length from short pamphlets to massive volumes, in form from poetry to literary essays, and in subject from social criticism to a vast scientific treatise. Sorel dealt with many fields of interest, and he himself describes his varied works in the 'Avertissement' to his Science universelle (1635 edition) in the following way:

> J'ai premièrement composé des poésies et des histoires feintes, et puis je suis venu à écrire des histoires véritables, j'ai fait des discours de galanterie et puis j'ai fait des discours moraux, et après des politiques et enfin des théologiques. [. . .] Ainsi, des choses de plaisir je suis venu à celles qui sont utiles selon l'ordre du monde, et j'ai traité les choses de sciences et d'étude avec la meilleure méthode que j'ai pu trouver entre les vulgaires; mais enfin voulant monter à un degré encore plus haut, j'ai entrepris de chercher tout ce qui se peut savoir selon la nature, sans être préoccupé des autorités anciennes. [4]

---

[3] Fournel, La littérature indépendante et les écrivains oubliés (Paris 1862; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1968), p. 215.

[4] Charles Sorel, La Science Universelle, quoted by Emile Roy, La vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, sieur de Souvigny (1602-1674) (Paris, 1890; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1970), pp. 15-16.

In this chapter, I wish to study Sorel's life and combine this with a commentary on his works, as a background for the study of his best known literary production, L'Histoire comique de Francion.

Even today biographical information on Sorel is far from complete and as already noted, bibliographical studies are not conclusive. The first comprehensive study of Sorel was Roy's La vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, Sieur de Souvigny (1602-1674), first published in 1891, and reprinted in 1970 by Slatkine Reprints. The 1973 dissertation of Beverley Sue Knystautas[5] is the most recent and wide-ranging work of its kind, and deals with both Sorel's own works and those of his critics, as well as containing some discussion of his life. Most other studies deal with individual works by Sorel or those within one genre, and no further comprehensive biographies have been attempted, apparently because of the serious lack of information on Sorel's life.[6] This problem was acknowledged as early as 1735, when Niceron noted that:

---

[5] "Charles Sorel: An Inventory, Etat Présent and Appraisal."

[6] Among shorter general studies of Sorel are the following: Robert Barrouz, "Sorel (Charles)", in Georges Grente, ed., Dictionnaire des lettres françaises (Paris: A Fayard, 1954), III, le dix-septième siècle, pp. 957-960; René Etiemble, "Un écrivain généreux: Charles Sorel", Hygiène des lettres, V: C'est le bouquet (Paris: Gallimard, 1967), pp. 23-35; Emile Henriot, "Charles Sorel", Les Livres du second rayon: irréguliers et libertins (Paris: B. Grasset, 1926), pp. 71-78; Roger Judrin, "Charles Sorel", Nouvelle Revue Française, 128 (1963). pp. 291-295.

> Ce qu'on sçait de lui se reduit à peu de chose; & il n'est plus gueres connu que par ses Ouvrages, dont la plûpart même sont tombés dans l'oubli. [7]

The marked lack of any other reliable sources of biographical information on Sorel has made the preparation of this chapter difficult, and accounts for the many gaps in the information presented.

Sorel was born in Paris at the turn of the century. His birthdate is given as anything from 1599 to 1602.[8] (Determining the exact date of birth of many authors is of little significance, but this controversy in Sorel's case is important because it affects the attribution of several works to the precocious writer.)

Sorel's father was a Procureur au Parlement in Paris and his grandfather was a magistrate in a small town in

---

[7] Niceron, Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des hommes illustres dans la république des lettres, (Paris, 1735; rpt. Farnborough, Hants, England: Gregg International Publishers, 1969), v. 31, 391.

[8] For discussions on Sorel's date of birth, see A. Adam, Romanciers du XVIIe siècle (Paris: Gallimard, 1958), p. 1347, note 1 (re p. 21); Michaud, Biographie universelle, ancienne et moderne, (Graz: Austria, Akademische Druck-u. Verlagsanstalt, 1969), XXXI 732; Niceron, Mémoires, XXXI, 391; André Thérive, "Introduction", La Jeunesse de Francion (Paris: Editions Bossard, 1922), p. 13; Robert Barrouz, "Sorel (Charles)" in Le dix-septième siècle, vol. III of Dictionnaire des lettres françaises, ed. Georges Grente (Paris: A. Fayard, 1954), III, 957; Gustave Reynier. Le Roman réaliste au XVIIe siècle, (Paris, 1914; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1971), pp. 130, 147; Jean-Pierre Leroy, "Réflexions critiques de Sorel sur son oeuvre romanesque", XVIIe siècle, no. 105 (1974), p. 37.

Picardy.[9] Sorel was a member of the bourgeoisie who spent his life in Paris. However, as Emile Roy points out:

> les Sorel de Paris se piquaient d'appartenir à la plus vieille noblesse du royaume; ils se rattachaient à l'ancienne famille picarde des Sorel d'Ugny, laquelle se rattachait elle-même au Shorel du comté de Kildar, et comptant à la fois parmi ses illustrations les anciens rois de l'Angleterre, et Agnès Sorel, la Dame de Beauté.[10]

Charles Sorel himself was a true Parisian and knew the city and its people very well. His observant nature adds all sorts of interesting details to his literary works and makes his social commentaries more useful to those who study the seventeenth century in France.

Charles Bernard, Sorel's uncle, was the Premier Historiographe de France and Sorel purchased this position in 1635 when his uncle became ill. Sorel wrote several works which were related to his post, although many were just adaptations or completions of work done by others. His true interest lay in writing books in many other fields. In fact, he began his literary career long before he acquired the historiographer's position.

Sorel himself was never a rich man, but he did have a private income, some land and a country house. It was,

---

[9] Roy, La vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, p. 2.

[10] Ibid., p. 4.

however, a serious financial blow for Sorel to lose the regular remuneration, although not the title, of historiographer in 1663, as was the reduction of his revenue from the Hôtel de Ville in 1666. M. Nicolet describes his financial position as follows:

> Or, à partir de 1663, les historiographes ne sont plus couchés sur l'état du Roi; ils passent au nombre de gratifiés. Et, si le paiement des pensions se fait souvent attendre, celui des gratifications est encore plus aléatoire. En même temps, Sorel subit d'autres pertes d'argent; un acte du 22 mars 1666 atteste une réduction de ses rentes sur l'Hôtel de Ville. [11]

In spite of his limited financial means, Sorel never accepted the patronage or protection of a noble who could have guaranteed financial security, although this was a common arrangement for the seventeenth century among writers and artists. He was too fond of his independance and literary freedom to risk having to give it up for possible security. Sorel had maintained the family home in Paris, but finally,

> Léger d'argent et affamé d'indépendance, il avait accepté chez son beau-frère, [le sieur Parmentier], substitut du procureur général, un modeste logement, où il vivait libre de tous liens. [12]

This maintenance of his independance may be seen as an

---

[11] M. Nicolet, "La Condition de l'homme de lettres au XVIIe siècle à travers l'oeuvre de deux contemporains: Charles Sorel et A. Furetière", Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France, 63e année, no. 3, p. 371.

[12] Emile Colombey, "Avant-propos" to L'Histoire comique de Francion, nouvelle édition (Paris: A. Delahays, 1858), p. 10.

indication of the sincerity of the opinions Sorel expresses in his works, since they represent his own ideas, free of many restraints accepted by other authors of the period, although the overall controls of the society in which he lived are still a factor which he could not hope to avoid.

Sorel never married and died in March 1674, still writing, although both impoverished and generally unrecognized by his contemporaries. Robert Barrouz tells us in Grente's Dictionnaire des lettres françaises that:

> [S]eul l'abbé de Marolles lui consacre, en adieu funèbre, un quatrain:
>
> Charles Sorel, nommé science universelle,
> Vous nous avez quittés trop tôt pour notre bien,
> Modeste, vertueux, d'un si doux entretien,
> Philosophe, orateur, historien fidèle. [13]

However, personal judgements on Sorel by his contemporaries vary widely. Adam Antoine, in the introduction to his Romanciers du XVIIe siècle notes that Sorel was liked and respected by many of his contemporaries.[14]

Sorel's very close friend Guy Patin provides us with a more detailed description of our author in a letter he wrote to Falconet dated November 25, 1653:

> Je puis bien vous dire des nouvelles de M. Sorel, puisqu'il y a trente-cinq ans qu'il est mon bon

---

[13] Barrouz, "Sorel", in Le dix-septième siècle, Vol. III of Dictionnaire des lettres françaises, p. 958.

[14] Adam, "Le Roman français au XVIIe siècle", Romanciers du XVIIe siècle, pp. 24-25.

> ami. C'est un petit homme grasset, avec un grand nez aigu, qui regarde de près, qui paraît fort mélancolique et ne l'est point. Il n'y a guère que moi qui le fasse parler et avec qui il aime à s'entretenir. Il est fort delicat, je l'ai vu souvent malade; neanmoins il vit commodément, parce qu'il est fort sobre [. . .] [15]

Even Emile Roy, in his sympathetic study of Sorel, tells us that:

> [il] pensait peu de bien des autres, beaucoup de lui-même, et il le disait comme il le pensait, souvent, dans le monde et dans ses livres. [. . .] Il aim[ait] surtout à rappeler sa jeunesse, quand il était dans la force et la joie du talent. [16]

However, a much more disagreeable description of the author of the Francion was made by one of Sorel's contemporaries, Furetière, in his novel Le roman bourgeois (1666). Furetière chose the thinly-disguised name of 'Charoselles' for one of his characters. Part of the physical description of this character is as follows:

> [Le] nez, qu'on pouvoit à bon droit appeler son Eminence, et qui estoit tousjours vestu de rouge, avoit esté fait en apparence pour un colosse; neantmoins il avoit esté donné à un homme de taille assez courte. Ce n'est pas que la nature eust rien fait perdre à ce petit homme, car ce qu'elle luy avoit osté en hauteur, elle le lui avoit rendu en grosseur, de sorte qu'on luy trouvoit assez de chair, mais fort mal pestrie. Sa chevelure estoit la plus desagréable du monde, [. . .] Ses yeux gros et bouffis avoient quelque chose de plus que d'estre à fleur de teste. Il y en a qui ont cru que, comme on se met sur des balcons en saillie hors des fenestres pour

---

[15] Guy Patin, Lettres, (Réveillé-Paris), III, p. 17, lettre à Falconet du 25 novembre 1653, quoted by Roy, La vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, p. 13.

[16] Roy, La vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, pp. 11-12.

> decouvrir de plus loin, aussi la nature luy avoit mis des yeux en dehors pour decouvrir ce qui se faisoit de mal chez ses voisins. [17]

Furetière continues with an equally disagreeable series of judgements on Charoselle's character, such as those which follow:

> Jamais il n'y eut un homme plus medisant ny plus envieux; il ne trouvoit rien de bien fait à sa fantaisie. [. . .] C'estoit le plus grand reformateur en pis qui ait jamais esté, et il corrigeoit toutes les choses bonnes pour les mettre mal. Il n'a point veu d'assemblée de gens illustres qu'il n'ait tâché de la decrier; encore, pour mieux cacher son venin, il faisoit semblant d'en faire l'eloge, lorsqu'il en faisoit en effet la censure, et il ressembloit à ces bestes dangereuses qui en pensant flatter égratignent: car il ne pouvoit souffrir la gloire des autres, et autant de choses qu'on mettoit au jour, c'estoient autant de tourmens qu'on luy preparoit. [. . .] Sa vanité naturelle s'estoit accruë par quelque reputation qu'il avoit eue en jeunesse, à cause de quelques petits ouvrages qui avoient eu quelque debit. Ce fut là un grand malheur pour les libraires [. . .] [18]

Although Furetière and Sorel were once friends, it is obvious that there was little love lost between them at the time of Furetière's writing.

Although his personal and financial successes seem to have been few, Sorel did succeed in becoming a prolific and widely-published writer. His first publication was probably l'Epithalame sur l'heureux mariage du tres-chrestien Roy de

---

[17] Furetière, Le Roman bourgeois, Romanciers du XVIIe siècle, pp. 1027-1028.

[18] Ibid., pp. 1028-1029.

France & de Navarre Louys XIII. de ce nom, avec Madame Anne d'Austriche, fille du Catholique Roy d'Espagne, which appeared in 1616. This is a relatively short poem (twenty-one stanzas) full of mythological references, since the King and his Queen are likened to demi-gods, full of passion for each other because of one of Cupid's arrows. The whole poem is definitely very favorable to the monarch and Sorel expresses praise and pleasure on the occasion of the wedding. The poem concludes with the wish that:

> Et que d'eux-deux un Mars il naisse,
> Qui l'orgueil du Turban rabaisse,
> Par sa proüesse, & sa vertu
> Qu'il soit le support de la France
> Pour la grandeur de la vaillance
> Dont on le verra revestü. [19]

About the same time, Sorel wrote an historical work entitled Les Vertus du Roy, panégyrique de Louis XIII.[20] This is a longer work listed as having 190 pages in the catalogue of the Bibliothèque Nationale. Sorel himself emphasizes his youth at the time of the composition of this work when he describes it in the following way in the Bibliothèque françoise:

> A dix sept ou dix huit ans l'autheur qui nous est icy en objet fit un livre intitulé Les Vertus

---

[19] For edition consulted for this and all other unfootnoted references in this chapter, consult bibliography, pp. 200-202 for a complete list of Sorel's works used and the editions in which they were consulted. In the case of more than one edition being used, or a long work, a full footnote will be provided.

[20] Roy, La vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, p. 411.

du Roy qui est un panegyrique du feu Roy Loüis XIII. et l'exemplaire d'un monarque parfait.[21]

Sorel then turned to fictional work, and published his first novel L'Histoire amoureuse de Cléagénor et de Doristée in 1621 (although the privilège dates from 1620). This work of 460 pages is unsigned and therefore remains among those whose attribution to Sorel remains in doubt.[22] The novel relates a very complicated love story, full of kidnappings and deception, but one which ends happily for the central characters.

Emile Roy attributes another work written in 1621 to Sorel, although it was possibly written in collaboration with the Comte de Cramail. This work is entitled Les Thèses ou conclusions amoureuses contenant LXVII articles adressés aux dames par le Bachelier Europhile avec des réponses par le docteur Philarète: à la suite les anti-thèses des dames de Cypre contre le Bachelier Europhile et le docteur Philarète. Sorel was at the time of the composition of this work secretary to Cramail, who was a literary figure and a part of the court circle.

These works herald the beginning of a period of

---

21 Kocher, "A Critical Edition of La Bibliothèque françoise of Charles Sorel," Diss. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1965, p. 570.

22 Jean-Pierre Leroy, in "Réflexions critiques de Sorel sur son oeuvre romanesque", XVIIe siècle, no. 105 (1974), p. 32, notes that it is classified as an anonymous work in the Bibliothèque Nationale.

extraordinary literary production for Sorel. In 1622 he published a second novel entitled Le Palais d'Angélie. It was published under the name of le sieur de Marzilly, but Sorel claims it as his own in the Bibliothèque françoise.[23] Emile Roy explains this apparent discrepancy by stating that:

> [Marzilly] C'est, à une lettre près, le nom d'un courtisan peu scrupuleux, à qui le jeune auteur avait sans doute donné son livre pour qu'il s'en fit honneur, et qui oublia de le récompenser.[24]

This novel is very long (1066 pages) and again relates a complicated love story.

Also in 1622 a short work entitled La Louange et l'utilité des bottes par le Chevalier Rozandre was published in Paris by Robert Daufresne. The narrator Rozandre notes that the wearing of boots has become a mark of nobility in French society, and expounds on the virtues of this type of footwear. The work ridicules the habit of wearing boots on the part of some Bourgeois and poorer noblemen who do not even possess horses. The author goes on to describe the respect given to such a person by other members of a society which judges moral or social rank by apparel. In this short comical piece, Sorel succeeds in communicating an interesting observation on Parisian society of his time. The author ends his little treatise with the observation that:

---

[23] Kocher, p. 556.

[24] Roy, La Vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, p. 54.

> Cela fera que desormais il n'y aura pas un Cordonnier qui ne me respecte, & qui ne s'offre à me chausser à credit, en consideration de ce que je seray cause qu'il gaignera plus que jamais, & qu'il vendra des bottes à tous les Bourgeois qui vont à l'entrée du Roy.

The above work is attributed to Sorel by Roy. He justifies this attribution by noting that Sorel uses the pseudonym of Rozandre in the Palais d'Angélie and that this study on boots is reproduced almost word for word in L'Histoire comique de Francion.[25] However, this in itself does not constitute a convincing argument, since Sorel borrowed on occasion from the works of others. It is true that Sorel recounts the entire Louange des bottes in the Francion,[26] transposing it a bit by making Hortensius the victim of a practical joke. Sorel uses this incident as the inspiration for Hortensius' subsequent discourse on boots. Since Hortensius is one of the most ridiculed characters in the novel, it appears that Sorel is presenting this story of the boots in a satirical way.

In 1623, Sorel published his Nouvelles françoises où se trouvent les divers effets de l'amour et de la fortune. This work is a collection of short stories with a variety of

---

[25] Ibid., p. 417.

[26] Sorel, L'Histoire comique de Francion in Romanciers du XVIIe siècle, pp. 413-417.
All future references to the Francion will be from this edition unless otherwise noted and it will be referred to simply by bracketed page numbers following the reference or quotation, unless further explanation is required.

themes, which Sorel states in his "Au Lecteur" are not all of his own invention.[27] They are notable because they are set in France and feature characters not of noble birth, both contrary to the literary tendencies in France at that time.

According to Romeo Arbour, even the youthful Sorel had an ideal for society which he expressed in the Nouvelles françoises. Arbour states that:

> Il se crée une société selon son coeur, où les critères de valeur ne se fondent pas simplement sur la naissance, mais sur la générosité, la délicatesse de l'esprit, la sincérité et le naturel. [28]

However, Emile Roy does not judge Sorel quite so favorably. Although he recognizes the audacity of Sorel in his idea, he feels that it is not carried far enough and is limited to details like the names of the characters. He regrets that:

> Malheureusement son audace se borne à ces minuties, et il dépense tout son esprit dans sa préface. [29]

Sorel re-published his work as Les Nouvelles choisies in 1645, adding two more stories and making some changes in the earlier ones. He also used the material in the Nouveau Recueil [. . .] which was published in 1644. One of the

---

[27] Knystautas, "Charles Sorel", p. 57.

[28] Romeo Arbour, "Langage et société dans les Nouvelles françoises de Charles Sorel", Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa, 41, no. 2 (1971), p. 189.

[29] Roy, La vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, p. 50.

stories added to the second edition, "Les Respects nuisibles", is remarquable in that it is the first nouvelle in French literature which is presented in the first person.[30]

About this time Sorel became acquainted with a group of poets and writers of the era, including Théophile de Viau, du Vivier, Bordier, Boisrobert, Racan, Malherbe, and Porchères l'Augier.[31] It was in collaboration with some of these authors that Sorel wrote his next work, Vers pour le ballet des Bacchanales (1623).

Later in the same year, Sorel produced a much more important literary work, L'Histoire comique de Francion, first published in 1623 as an unsigned work. Both his prolific production (which would continue throughout his life) and the fact of Sorel's extreme youth have led to controversy over his authorship of certain works and especially of the Francion. Pierre Loüys' opinion, as outlined by Frédéric Lachèvre (who concurred), was that:

> Charles Sorel n'est pas et ne peut être l'auteur du Roman comique de Francion. [. . .] un roman

---

30 René Godenne, "Les débuts de la nouvelle narrée à la première personne (1645-1800)", Romanische Forschungen, 82 b., h. 3 (1970), pp. 253-267.

31 Kocher, "A Critical Edition of La Bibliothèque françoise", p. 16.

> d'une observation aussi aiguë que Francion ne pouvait être l'oeuvre d'un jeune homme de dix-huit à vingt ans. [32]

Emile Magne, on the other hand, does not quarrel with Sorel's ability to produce literary works at an early age, and instead uses Sorel's other works as a justification for the ability he shows in the more mature work, Francion.[33] The controversy has been dealt with in many studies,[34] but modern scholars seem to agree in attributing this work to Sorel, who never acknowledged it directly himself, not even years later in his Bibliothèque françoise. He does however defend the work with great vigor in this catalogue of books of value, and thus seems to give himself away by his very enthusiasm for the book's literary merit:

> Pour un livre qui ait la vraye forme d'un roman, on nous met en jeu L'Histoire comique de Francion laquelle a esté imprimée pour la premiere fois il y a plus de quarante ans et qui semble estre autorisée en ce que depuis si long-temps plusieurs se plaisent autant à la voir que le premier jour aprés plus de soixante impressions [. . .] outre qu'elle a esté traduite en anglois, en allemand,

---

[32] Pierre Louÿs as quoted by Lachèvre, "Pierre Louÿs et l'histoire littéraire, Charles Sorel et le roman 'Francion', 1623", Mercure de France, 15 janvier, 1926, pp. 370-371.

[33] Magne, "Revue de la Quinzaine", Mercure de France, 15 février, 1926, pp. 165-166.

[34] See Adam, Romanciers du XVIIe siècle, p. 25-26; F. Lachèvre, "Francion est-il de Charles Sorel?", Nouvelles glanes bibliographiques et littéraires, Paris, 1933; Giuseppe Sétaro, "'Francion' dans la vie et dans l'oeuvre de Charles Sorel", Revue des langues vivantes, v. 28, no 2. (1962), p. 134-148.

> et en quelques autres langues.[35] [. . .] Pour conclure cecy, nous sçaurons qu'en quelque estat que soit le livre dont il est question, des gens qui le veulent élever au dessus des livres espagnols disent que tous leurs livres comiques ne sont que des vies des gueux et de faquins au lieu que c'est icy le recit de la vie d'un gentilhomme qui veritablement estoit dans la desbauche mais que parmy cela il monstroit beaucoup de marques d'esprit et de generosité et que toutes ses avantures estoient naives et divertissantes. [36]

In the third edition of the Francion, it is attributed to Nicolas de Moulinet, sieur du Parc. Sorel even invented a complete fictional biography for the late "author" of the novel.[37] However, Emile Roy informs us that a man by the name of Moulinet existed but that:

> En réalité, le sieur Moulinet, bon normand, avocat de son métier et plus tard comédien, a composé des romans ennuyeux et des facéties joyeuses, mais n'a jamais mis la main au Francion. [38]

Sorel also denies his authorship of the work in the section of the Bibliothèque françoise devoted to works attributed to

---

[35] See bibliography, pp. 214-216 for a listing of some of these many editions.

[36] Kocher, "A Critical Edition of La Bibliothèque Françoise of Charles Sorel", pp. 337-339.

[37] Sorel, "Advis aux lecteurs touchant l'autheur de ce livre", in Romanciers du XVIIe siècle, pp. 1267-1270.

[38] Roy, La vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, p. 61.

himself.[39] It is ironic that Sorel felt obliged to deny this popular novel and that he believed that his valuable and memorable work lay in more serious volumes which are now forgotten, while the Francion is virtually his only well-known achievement.

Modern critics have also found this work to have redeeming qualities. The Francion expresses, largely through the central character of the same name, opinions on many basic topics of concern. These range from ideas on the importance of money as opposed to social rank, from the validity of marriage to the meaning and purpose of life and death. Commentaries on these and other subjects are the most common in the first (1623) edition, which carried the subtitle of "Fléau des vicieux".[40] In subsequent editions which were revised by the author (1626 and 1633), these commentaries are attenuated by Sorel's changes to the text and his strategic additions or deletions. In the second edition, Sorel removes many of the passages likely to

---

[39] On tient que ce peut estre luy qui a composé une Histoire comique remplie de choses qu'il inventa et d'autres qu'il avoit oüy dire. Mais quelques personnes sçavent assez qu'on a confondu cecy avec un livre du sieur du Parc, autheur de ce temps là qui y a meslé des contes fort licencieux, et que d'autres encore y ont travaillé.
(Kocher, "A Critical Edition of La Bibliothèque Françoise, p. 558.)

[40] Roy, La vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, p. 62. This is not verifiable on the title page of which I have a copy, from J. Lough's article "Another Copy of the First Edition of Sorel's Francion", French Studies, 20, no. 2 (1966) pp. 121-122, with plate.

offend, but does not really change the basic character of the novel, especially in its advocacy of personal freedoms. Sorel also adds four books to the work, bringing us up to Francion's marriage.

In the additions made to the novel in the third edition (1633), Sorel's intentions seem to be to modify the basic character of the Francion considerably. He is attempting to make it, at least superficially, more a novel and less a critique of society. The final book of the novel, added in this edition, serves only to strengthen its new apppearance as an entertaining fictional work with no important deeper message. The fact that Sorel had to move Francion's marriage back from its position at the end of the second edition, to place it at the end of the additional book, indicates just how artificial the last chapter's presence is.

However, even in the third edition, the remaining social criticism is not simply intended to draw attention to the faults of society, as Sorel saw them, but to support the author's love for individual freedoms by contrasting examples of men enslaved and made miserable by society with Francion's free and basically joyful life experience.[41]

In spite of Sorel's good intentions, some of the

---

[41] Sétaro, "'Francion' dans la vie et dans l'oeuvre de Charles Sorel", Revue des Langues Vivantes, 28, no. 2 (1962), p. 140.

ideas in the Francion could perhaps have been better and more fully developed. The novel's popularity permitted its spread throughout Europe, and many other authors used its pages as a source of ideas for their own works. One of these was the great Molière.[42] It is not really surprising that some of these ideas were not exploited to their fullest when one considers that Sorel was very young when he wrote the Francion and that, by his own admission, it was produced extremely rapidly.[43]

After writing the Francion, Sorel went on to create many other works, which were even more varied in format and content than those he produced in the first years of his career.

In 1626, besides publishing the second edition of the Francion, Sorel produced three other works: a novel, a work of literary criticism and a poetic piece. The novel was entitled L'Orphyse de Chrysante, histoire cyprienne and was again a very long work of 1049 pages. It was attributed to

---

[42] Fournel, La Littérature indépendante et les écrivains oubliés, p. 219.

[43] Sorel states, in his 'Avertissement d'importance aux lecteurs' to the first edition of the Francion that:

> Je seray bien ayse qu'ils [ses critiques] facent un meilleur livre avec aussi peu de temps, et aussi peu de soing comme celluy cy a esté faict. Je n'ay pas composé moins de trente deux pages d'impression en un jour, et si encore a ce esté avec un esprit incessament diverty a d'autres pensées ausquelles il ne s'en faloit guere que je ne me donnasse entierement. (p. 63)

an unknown Athenian named 'Chrysante' in the Avertissement, but the dedication and the privilège both bear Sorel's name.[44] It must be an unusual work for a novel, since Roy notes that:

> Le nouveau livre [. . .] n'était pas aussi gai que le Francion; il était même si sérieux et si embrouillé qu'un docte Allemand crut y deviner des recherches sur la pierre philosophale, et vint exprès à Paris, pour en conférer avec l'auteur. [45]

This work was re-issued in 1633 under the title L'Ingratitude punie où l'on voit les avantures d'Orphyse.

Le Tombeau des Romans, où il est discouru: I Contre les romans, II Pour les romans appears to be a joint work of Canon Fancan, le Comte de Cramail and Sorel. It is a attack on the novel as a literary genre.[46] Since this work did not seem to have the desired impact, Sorel would soon turn from criticism to the anti-novel format to combat the novel because this method seemed to be more palatable to the reading public.

The last publication Sorel produced in 1626 was the poetic piece entitled Grand bal de la duchesse douairière de Billebahaud, (ballet dansé par le Roi en février 1626); -- vers du dit ballet par le sieur Bordier, avant charge de la poésie près de Sa Majesté, par Claude de l'Estoile, Imbert,

---

[44] Leroy, "Reflexions critiques de Charles Sorel", p. 33.

[45] Roy, La vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, p. 112.

[46] Ibid.

Sorel, I. R.[47] The text consulted presented what appear to be extracts of the ballet which showed dances purported to be from America, Asia, Europe, Africa and the North (Greenland). The King himself danced the part of a Persian Gentleman and as himself, the King of France. From the summary of verses it is not apparent what sort of performance the ballet really was, but Emile Magne commented that it was:

> De tous les ballets donnés à la Cour, le plus bouffon peut-être, le plus fantaisiste. [. . .] On y vit paraître toutes sortes de types étranges, accompagnés de toutes sortes d'animaux ou plutôt d'hommes travestis en animaux. Les habits en étaient d'une complication extrême, traités en grotesques par des dessinateurs à l'imagination débridée, destinés à provoquer l'étonnement et le rire. [48]

The ballet ends with a tribute to the Dowager and to the

---

[47] This is the title given by Roy in his bibliography (p. 402). He also notes that there are three different copies of this work, which probably explains the variant title on the copy I consulted. It reads Grand Bal de la douairiere de Billebahault. Ballet dansé par le Roy au mois de Fevrier 1626. Vers du dit ballet, par le sieur Bordier, ayant charge de la Poësie pres de sa Majesté. Even though Sorel's name is not mentioned, I assume the two texts are related and have based my comments on the copy available to me. This copy has only 16 pages, while the copy referred to by Knystautas in her thesis (p. 113) has 68 pages. The text I consulted may be a series of extracts from the other text(s).

[48] Emile Magne, Les Fêtes en l'Europe au XVIIe siècle (Paris: Martin-Dupu, 1930), vol. 2, p. 74, as quoted in commentary card preceding Bordier, Grand Bal de la Douairière de Billebahauvlt (Paris, Imprimerie du Louvre, 1626) in microfilm, by University Microfilms Limited, Fletcher Bibliography no. 10, Microfilm Order No. D7, copy of book in P.J.S. Richardson Collection, Royal Academy of Dancing (reel #1).

"Grandes Reynes dont les yeux captivent les Roys".

Roy attributes an unpublished work entitled Meditations amoureuses to Sorel, stating that it was written in 1627. This is a collection of poems, to which Sorel refers in the 'Remarques' for Book Two of the Berger extravagant (1646 edition).[49]

Sorel published the first edition of Le Berger extravagant où parmy des fantaisies amoureuses on voit les impertinences des romans et de la poesie in 1627. This is another long novel which was well-received and published several times. It was later translated into English. In the following year, 1628, Sorel published his Remarques sur les XIV livres du Berger extravagant, où les plus extraordinaires choses qui s'y voyent sont appuyées de diverses authoritez, et où l'on treuve des recueils de tout ce qu'il y a de remarquable dans les romans [. . .], which are almost as long as the novel itself. The novel was intended as literary criticism and was republished in 1633-1634 with the 'Remarques' under the title L'Anti-Roman ou l'Histoire du Berger Lysis accompagnée de remarques par Jean de la Lande, poitevin.

The novel revolves around a young man, Lysis, who becomes enamoured of fictional works and begins to try to live them in reality, much like Don Quijote. He "becomes" a

---

[49] Roy, La vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, p. 417.

shepherd and has many adventures in his new environment, protected from reality by a group of rich friends. The ridiculous situations in which Lysis finds himself when he tries to apply the conventions of the pastoral novel to the real world, serve to satirize this genre, which Sorel detested. Besides the 'Remarques', Clarimond, a character in the novel, serves as Sorel's spokesman in the matter of literary criticism.[50] In the end, Lysis is cured of his fantasies and returns to normal life, although he is still pampered by the friends who deceived him all along as to the nature of reality.

Le Comte de Cramail published another work generally attributed to Sorel in 1628. Entitled Le Tombeau de l'orateur français ou Discours de Tyrcis, pour servir de réponse à la lettre de Périandre touchant l'apologie pour M. de Balzac, the work is an example of the literary cooperation between the two authors during this period.

Also published in 1628 was Sorel's Avertissement sur l'histoire de la monarchie françoise. (It was reprinted in 1630 and 1633.) This work is significant because it contains the historiographer's ideas on the writing of history. Emile Roy notes that:

> Ce n'est pas seulement le fond de l'histoire que Sorel veut renouveler, c'est la forme, la manière,

---

[50] Burf Kay, "A Writer Turns Against Literature: Charles Sorel's Le Berger extravagant", Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa, no. 43 (1973), p. 283.

> telles sont à ses yeux les qualités essentielles du style historique. [51]

Another work, entitled Histoire de la Monarchie Française où sont décrits les faits mémorables et les vertus héroiques de nos anciens rois, (depuis Pharamond jusqu'en 752), was published in 1629 and again in 1632. This work is considerably longer, containing over eight hundred pages. Sorel applied his ideas on the writing of history in the composition of this work, and seemed very satisfied with the results. Years later in the Bibliothèque françoise, he noted that:

> L'histoire ne sembla là ny d'un stile trop long ny trop succinct et quoy qu'elle soit moins ample que quelques autres, on croit qu'elle comprend presque autant de choses, ayant esté trié avec grand soin de plusieurs originaux.[52]

In 1632 and 1633, Sorel produced three parodies of the Gazette de France, entitled, Gazette et Nouvelles ordinaires de divers pays lointains de la boutique de Mr. Jacques Vaulemenards, musicien ordinaire de la basse Andalousie dated January 9, 1632, Le Courrier veritable du Bureau des postes estably pour les nouvelles hétérogenées dated April 19, 1632, and Le Courrier veritable, arrivé en poste, on le vend à l'enseigne du divertissement nocturne, Rue du mauvais passage, dated January 1633. Roy attributes

---

[51] Roy, La vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, p. 337.

[52] Kocher, "A Critical Edition of La Bibliothèque Françoise, p. 570.

these works to Sorel, since they are reprinted with only a change in title and date in the Recueil de Sercy (1644 and 1658).[53]

In 1634, Sorel published the Rôle des présentations faites aux grands jours de l'éloquence françoise, in which a thinly-disguised Académie carries on a ridiculous discussion of the qualities of the word car. The same year, the increasingly religious Sorel published Pensées chrétiennes sur les Commandements de Dieu. This work was intended to present the obligations and duties of a Christian, with examples to illustrate Sorel's principles. He notes in his Bibliothèque françoise that:

> Ce qu'il en a fait n'a esté que pour monstrer qu'il vouloit contribuer à la gloire de Dieu et de la religion autant que pour lors il s'en trouvoit capable.[54]

Also in 1634, Sorel published another long novel entitled La Vraie Suite des aventures de la Polyxène du Feu Sieur de Molière, suivie et conclue sur ses mémoires. In this case, Sorel simply wrote a conclusion for the unfinished novel by François Fouget, Sieur de Molière.[55]

Also in 1634, Sorel began what was probably the most ambitious writing project of his life. This was a four-

---

[53] Roy, La vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, p. 421.

[54] Kocher, "A Critical Edition of La bibliothèque Françoise, p. 572.

[55] Knystautas, "Charles Sorel", p. 114.

volume work collectively called La Science universelle. The volumes were entitled: La Science des Choses corporelles (1634), La Science des Choses spirituelles (1637), De la Confusion et des erreurs des sciences (1641), and De la perfection de l'âme [. . .] en suite l'ordre et l'origine des sciences et arts (1644). Sorel was very proud of this work as can be seen in his comments in the Bibliothèque françoise:

> Comme nous avons dit que La Science universelle estoit un livre des plus amples de nostre autheur, il peut bien aussi estre de plus importans [. . .] il n'y a gueres eu de contrée dans l'Europe où l'on n'en ait oüy parler [. . .] [56]

After Sorel succeeded his uncle Charles Bernard as historiographer of France, he had to edit or complete various works the older man had started but had been unable to complete. One of these was the Généalogie de la Maison Royalle de Bourbon avec les Portraits & Eloges des Princes, qui en sont sortis, & les Remarques historiques de leurs illustres actions depuis S. Loüis, jusqu'à Loüis XIII, which was published in 1634, 1636 and 1645. Though it appeared over Sorel's name, it was not truly his own work to any extent, and the last edition did indicate Bernard as the author.

In 1635, a work which Roy attributes to Sorel was published. Les visions admirables du Pèlerin du Parnasse is

---

[56] Kocher, "A Critical Edition of La Bibliothèque Françoise", pp. 584-585.

a collection of scenes of life in Paris. Roy states that:

> Le recueil est certainement de Sorel qui annonce dans l'Avertissement de la Science des choses corporelles, 1635, qu'il a "un livre de songes et de visions plein de descriptions agréables," non imprimé, et qui supprime cet avis dans les éditions suivantes de la Science universelle. [57]

Sorel's versatility is shown in that he next published a book on science, in 1636. Entitled Des Talismans ou Figures Faites sous certaines constellations, pour faire aymer, pour guerir les maladies [. . .], it was published again as Secrets astrologiques in 1640. It will also form part of Sorel's Science universelle at a later date. Sorel's purpose in writing this work is to vulgarize scientific knowledge and to attempt to destroy superstitious beliefs, which he opposed in all of his works.

In 1637, a work entitled Le Jugement du Cid composé par un Bourgeois de Paris, Marguillier de sa Paroisse was published. Roy attributes it to Sorel.[58] The author defends the Cid against the literary critics of the day, although he also takes Corneille to task for certain faults he sees in the work.

Knystautas refers to another of Sorel's works, the Recueil de lettres morales et politiques avec un Discours du Courtisan chrétien ou les moyens de vivre chrétiennement

---

[57] Roy, La vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, p. 418.

[58] Ibid. pp. 418-421.

dans la Cour, published around 1638 to 1641.[59] Apparently this work has been lost and therefore cannot be consulted.

From morality and theology, Sorel returns to the novel form in 1640, with the publication of La Solitude et l'Amour philosophique de Cléomède, premier sujet des exercices moraux de M. Charles Sorel. (It was re-published in 1643 as well.) This work, like so many of Sorel's, contains significant thought in the moral and historical fields. The hero, Cléomède seeks solitude to study and to escape society, and the novel contains many of the social criticisms presented in Sorel's other works. Sorel writes of this work:

> Depuis le mesme autheur prit un tel goust aux sciences que pour se preparer à leur profession, il s'adonna entierement à l'estude et en fit comme la vie et l'aliment de son esprit. Cela luy fit composer le livre De la Solitude et de l'amour philosophique de Cleomede qui est l'un de ceux où il a pris le plus de peine et de plaisir tout ensemble. [60]

This notation is particularly significant, since this is one of the few works of fiction Sorel admits to having written in the Bibliothèque françoise.

Also in 1640, the Comédie des Chansons, was published. Roy attributes it to Sorel[61] but Cioranescu

---

[59] Knystautas, "Charles Sorel", p. 118.

[60] Kocher, "A Critical Edition of La Bibliothèque françoise of Charles Sorel", p. 574.

[61] Roy, La vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, pp. 422-423.

attributes it to Charles de Beys.[62] It is a play full of popular songs and low language, but it appeared long after Sorel had removed most such allusions from the Francion.

In 1642, the Maison des jeux, où se trouvent les divertissemens d'une compagnie par des narrations agréables (et par des jeux d'esprit et autres entretiens d'une honnête conversation) appeared in two volumes. (It was reprinted in 1643 and 1657, as well as in more modern editions.) The novel is really a fictional or theatrical framework for the presentation of many types of conversational games. While such collections were reasonably common at the time, often by Italian authors, the presentation of such a framework was original. It appears this book may have been written in the 1620's because of references that appear to apply to it in other of Sorel's works. For example, Francion announces to Hortensius:

> [. . .] et puis il y en a un [livre] où j'ay descrit quelques divertissements champestres, avec des jeux, et des comedies et autres passe-temps. (Francion, p. 437)

In 1642, Sorel also published a book of which he was the editor, the Poëmata of Nicolas Sorel[63] and La deffence des Catalans, où l'on voit le juste sujet qu'ils ont eu de se retirer de la domination du roy d'Espagne; avec les

---

[62] Alexandre Cioranescu, Bibliographie de la littérature française du dix-septième siècle (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1966), III, p. 1873, no. 63434.

[63] Niceron, Mémoires, XXXI, p. 397.

droicts du Roy sur la Catalogne et le Rousillon.[64]

The following year, he published two short pieces which will later be included in the Nouveau Recueil, entitled Récit mémorable du Siège de la Ville de Pectus par le Prince Rhuma, and Relation extraordinaire, venue tout fraîchement du Royaume de Cypre, contenant le Veritable récit du Siège de Beauté, à Famagouste.

The Nouveau Recueil des pieces les plus agréables de ce temps ou 3e partie de la Maison des Jeux. Ensuite des Jeux de l'Inconnu et de la Maison des Jeux[65] followed in 1644. This work is a varied collection of short works by Sorel and other authors. It was published in a second edition entitled Recueil des pieces en prose les plus agréables de ce temps composé par divers autheurs, première partie in 1659 and 1660.

In 1646 Sorel once again published one of his uncle's histories, which he had continued. It is entitled Histoire du roi Louis XIII, composée par Messire Charles Bernard avec un discours sur la vie de cet historien.

Polyandre, Histoire comique is Sorel's return to the world of fiction in 1648. This work once again has a definite purpose in expressing social criticism. The experiences of the hero, Polyandre, permit Sorel to portray

---

[64] Cioranescu, Bibliographie, III, p. 1871, no. 63383.

[65] Also known as the Recueil de Sercy after its publisher, Nicolas de Sercy.

Parisian society, since Polyandre is an observer from out of town. He sees people from all social classes, but particularly from the bourgeoisie, the new noblesse de robe and the traditional noblesse d'épée. As in the Francion, the upper nobility are portrayed in such a manner as to make them appear unworthy of their station. To a lesser extent the novel also contains literary criticism. Sorel seems quite proud of his work, since he states rather immodestly in the Bibliothèque françoise that:

> [L'histoire] raconte les actions bigearres de plusieurs personnes du siecle et nous produit d'excellens caracteres comme d'un poëte, d'un alchymiste, d'un parasite, d'un amant volage et universel, et de quelques dames coquettes. Tout cela est assez dans la naïveté et dans la vray-semblance. On n'y trouve rien à souhaiter qu'une suite pour y donner de l'accomplissement.[66]

Also in 1648, Sorel published a work entitled Traité du bien de la Paix about which I can find no further information.

In 1649, two Mazarinades attributed to Sorel were published. The first, entitled Le Courier plaisant, apportant de plaisantes nouvelles dédiées aux curieux, is described by Roy in the following way:

> L'auteur raconte le siège du fort de Carême par le prince Carnaval, et reproduit souvent textuellement une Guerre des jours gras et des jours maigres que Sorel a insérée dans les Rem. du VIIIe livre de l'Anti-Roman [. . .] [67]

---

[66] Kocher, "A Critical Edition of the Bibliothèque françoise, p. 560.

[67] Roy, La vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, p. 421.

The other Mazarinade, Le Commerce des Nouvelles restably, ou Le Courier arresté par la Gazette, was well-accepted according to Roy. He notes that it:

> [. . .] a été réimprimée presque en entier dans le Catalogue des Mazarinades de Moreau et dans l'Histoire de la Presse, par Hotin. Tous deux la déclarent une des meilleures pièces du temps. Elle est de Sorel, comme le prouve la répétition d'une expression bizarre: "Madame l'histoire et Messieurs les Mémoire, ses agents," expression que Sorel avait déjà employée dans le Recueil de Sercy de 1644. [68]

Sorel returns to the realm of fiction with his next publication in 1650, Le Parasite Mormon, Histoire comique, which may have been written by Sorel in collaboration with friends,[69] but which is also attributed to La Mothe le Vayer.[70] This novel is very short for Sorel, since it contains only 204 pages. There is repetition of material in the Francion and the Polyandre as well as of the Connoissance des bons livres. There are three main characters, in three separate stories, whose purpose is to describe French writers of the first part of the seventeenth century.[71]

In 1652, Sorel published a work entitled Recueil

---

[68] Ibid., pp. 421-422.

[69] Ibid. pp. 423-424.

[70] A. A. Barbier, Dictionnaire des ouvrages anonymes (Paris: Maissonneuve et Larose, 1872), 3e éd., t. 3, p. 784, as referred to in Knystautas, "Charles Sorel", pp. 50, 127.

[71] Knystautas, "Charles Sorel", p. 51.

historique de diverses aventures arrivez aux princes, seigneurs, et grands de la cour, aux courtisans, aux scavans etc. It was reprinted under the title of Le Chemin de la Fortune ou bonnes regles de la vie pour acquerir des richesses [. . .] in 1663. As the titles indicate, these books relate experiences at court. Niceron states that they are in fact made up of fragments of an unpublished work, "La Science du Monde".[72]

In 1654, Sorel published a work entitled Discours sur l'Academie françoise establie pour la correction et l'embellissement du Langage [. . .], in which he purports to deal favorably with the Academy (in contrast to his Rôle des présentations). In the Bibliothèque françoise, he defends it in one sentence and dismisses the work: "Il ne s'y trouve rien de si problematique qu'on ne connoisse bien que tout cela est à l'avantage de cette illustre compagnie".[73]

Sorel published another historical work in 1658 entitled La Flandre Française ou traité curieuse des droits du Roi su la Flandre. In 1659 he published a 132 page satirizing "fable", the Description de l'Isle de la Portraiture, which Sorel identifies as an unsigned work of his youth in the Bibliothèque françoise, while hinting at

---

[72] Niceron, Mémoires, p. 404.

[73] Kocher, "A Critical Edition of La Bibliothèque françoise", pp. 562-563.

the work's hidden meaning.[74] At the same time, Sorel published another relatively short work entitled Relation de ce qui s'est passé au royaume de Sophie depuis les troubles excitez par la Rhétorique et l'Eloquence. He describes it as:

> une suite d'un livre appellé La Nouvelle allégorique ou relation des guerres de l'eloquence [de Furetière, 1658]. Mais cela semble estre fait pour monstrer que l'eloquence qu'on vante n'est point la vraye et que les autheurs qu'on y a choisis pour chefs de guerre ne sont pas tous dignes de l'employ qu'on leur donne. Ç'a esté une chose plus malaisée de composer ainsi une fable qui suivist l'autre et qui luy donnast un sens contraire que d'en inventer une nouvelle. [75]

In 1662, Sorel published a somewhat similar work entitled Relation de ce qui s'est passé dans la nouvelle découverte du royaume de Frisquemore. It was signed "De S." and would be the sort of book Sorel might enjoy writing since it portrays an imaginary utopia which has fine social institutions, and a detailed history and geography. Two French explorers discover it and we have the opportunity to note all its fine qualities.[76] Also in 1662, Sorel published a two-volume contemporary history of France which he called Histoire de la monarchie française sous Louis XIV contenant tout ce qui s'est passé de plus remarquable entre les couronnes de France et d'Espagne et autres pays étrangers,

---

[74] Ibid., p. 563.

[75] Ibid., p. 562.

[76] Knystautas, "Charles Sorel", pp. 72-73.

depuis l'an 1643 jusqu'en 1661 par C. de S.

In 1663, a work entitled Oeuvres diverses ou Discours meslez, avec cinquante lettres à des Dames sur divers sujets, par M. D. S. was published. Sorel indicates that this is the second part of the Nouveau Recueil,[77] and it is therefore similar to this work. The letters are dedicated to Mesdemoiselles de Sorel, probably the author's nieces.[78] In the stories and letters, we can study Sorel's attitudes on many topics.

In 1664 (and again in 1667), one of Sorel's most significant works was published. This is La Bibliothèque Françoise [. . .] Ou le choix et l'examen des livres françois qui traitent de l'éloquence, de la philosophie, de la dévotion et de la conduite des moeurs. Obviously, Sorel's intentions were not modest when he began this work. It is an amazingly complete study of the books of the time, accompanied by a notably unbiased commentary on the different works and authors. Moreover, Sorel's important work constitutes one of the first histories of the French novel.[79] Sorel's study is not limited to the novel, however, since it also deals with other genres. For example, in the

---

77 Kocher, "A Critical Edition of La Bibliothèque françois, p. 563.

78 Knystautas, "Charles Sorel", p. 77.

79 Frederick Green, "The Critic of the 17th Century and his attitude toward the French novel", Modern Philology, 24 (1926-1927), p. 290.

field of drama, Sorel's opinions are similar to the ones he always demonstrates: obeying a rule (such as the unity of time) is not a virtue in itself, and that common sense must be applied to the treatment of such limitations in each work.[80] This is typical of Sorel's pragmatic attitudes to any situation.

J.-P. Leroy, writing in his article "La Littérature médiévale dans la Bibliothèque française de Charles Sorel", states that:

> Or, ce qui surprend dans la Bibliothèque de Sorel c'est la grande tolérance des jugements. Sorel est un esprit indépendant et qui appartient à une génération impatiente des contraintes, se refuse à prescrire des règles et même à orienter le choix de ses lecteurs. [81]

This is not only one of the principal virtues of the work, but still another illustration of the value Sorel puts on individual judgement.

Following the Bibliothèque, still more works flowed from the pen of our prolific writer. Also in 1664, Sorel published an historical work which is almost an exact reproduction of one of his uncle Charles Bernard's, entitled Discours sur la Jonction des Mers par M. Charles Sorel,

---

[80] Kocher, "Charles Sorel and the Drama", Furman University Bulletin. Furman Studies Issue, 21, no. 4 (1973), p. 36.

[81] J.-P. Leroy, "La littérature médiévale dans la Bibliothèque française de Charles Sorel", La Société française de littérature comparée, Actes du septième congrès, Moyen âge et littérature comparée, Poitiers, 27-29 mai, 1965. (Paris: Didier, 1967), p. 104.

historiographe de France. This was followed in 1665 by the Science de l'Histoire avec le Jugement des principaux historiens, tant anciens que modernes.

Then, in the same year, Sorel published a very different work, La Maison des Jeux academiques, contenant un recueil general de tous les jeux divertissans pour se réjouir, et passer le temps agreablement. This volume contains games somewhat similar to those in the Maison des Jeux, but they are distinct works and the complete instructions with which Sorel furnishes his games can be instructive from a sociological point of view.[82] In 1666, Sorel returns to his historical writing, which is of less interest to us than his more literary efforts. This time the book is entitled Divers traités sur les droits et prérogatives des Rois de France, tirés des Mémoires historiques et politiques de M. C. S. S. D. S.

In 1669 and 1672, a new volume of the Maison des Jeux appeared under the title of Les Récréations galantes, ou Suite de la Maison des Jeux. This volume contains eighty-two different games. The "Extrait du Privilège du Roy" indicates that this volume is really a continuation of the La Maison des Jeux academiques, and not of the Maison des Jeux.[83] Roy also attributes a 1670 volume entitled L'Histoire des

---

[82] Knystautas, "Charles Sorel", pp. 64-65.

[83] Ibid., pp. 83-84.

pensées meslée de petits jeux, nouvelle galante to Sorel.[84]

De la Connoissance des bons livres (1671), is a work closely related to the Bibliothèque françoise and consists of literary criticism which concentrates on genres rather than on individual authors or works. Sorel outlines many of his ideas on the value of literature and the qualities it should possess.

Finally, in 1673, Sorel published a book entitled De la prudence ou des bonnes regles de la vie, pour l'acquisition, la conversation et l'usage légitime des biens du corps et de la fortune et des bien de l'âme. This work is similar to the Chemin de la Fortune, as the title would indicate.

Sorel died in 1674. His last publication appeared in 1673. Sorel was an active writer all his life, from an exceedingly early age until the time of his death. The tragedy of this prolific writer's life would seem to lie in not recognizing from where his future fame would spring. Instead of his much beloved and now out-dated Science universelle, it is the Histoire comique de Francion for which he is remembered today. Then again, since so much of his writing was done anonymously, perhaps Sorel was less concerned with recognition than with using the opportunity he had to express his opinion on many subjects to as wide an

---

[84] Roy, La vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, p. 424.

audience as possible.

Although Sorel is frequently considered to be a polemicist, I am not considering this aspect of his work in this thesis. Rather, I have dealt exclusively with the way in which he expresses his ideas. This interpretation will be applied consistently throughout my work.

Chapter 2

Libertine currents in France and the Francion

The Francion was written with a two-fold purpose: to entertain the reader and to spread certain philosophical and moral ideas. In the "Advertissement d'importance aux lecteurs" to the 1623 edition of the Francion, Sorel explains the latter purpose clearly:

> Jamais je n'eusse fait veoir ceste piece, sans le desir que j'ay de monstrer aux hommes les vices ausquels ils se laissent insensiblement emporter. [. . .] C'est icy une philosophie qui n'est jamais venuë dans la cervelle de tous nos vieux resveurs; [. . .] ces resveries là contiennent des choses que jamais personne n'a eu la hardiesse de dire. [. . .] Ceux qui auront bonne veuë y remarqueront que le jugement y abonde, et que je n'ay rien dit sans raison.
>
> (Francion, pp. 61-63)

In the "Advertissement" to the 1626 edition, he adds that he "avoi[t] meslé l'utile avec l'agréable".[1] The work was first published anonymously, and then under the pseudonym of le Sieur du Parc, which may have permitted Sorel greater freedom to express his ideas. For the moment, we wish to

---

[1] Francion, p. 1261.

define this new philosophy presented in the Francion, and to establish its place in the current of philosophical ideas in the seventeenth century.

The ideas expressed by Sorel can be seen as a reflection of some of the unorthodox philosophical systems of the first few decades of the seventeenth century. Among the more 'advanced' thinkers of the times, the libertins, or free-thinkers, proposed a concept of life, the world, and religion based on a free and individualised way of thought. They absolutely refused to accept generally acknowledged beliefs, especially those concerning religious dogma. Libertinage érudit is the name used to define the position of a group of learned theoreticians who were adherents of this philosophy. In France, Guy Patin, Gassendi, G. Naudé, Théophile de Viau, and others, played a determining role within this group while some, such as Sorel, only participated indirectly by the importance which they attribute to the use of judgement and logic in an individual's thought.

Although there were important differences in thought among the libertins themselves,[2] they had a certain number of fundamental principles in common. René Pintard, outlines the points the libertins held in common as follows:

---

[2] René Pintard, Le Libertinage érudit dans la première moitié du XVIIe siècle (Paris: Bolvin, 1943), I, 566-567.

> Prise de position parfaitement nette en faveur de l'hypothèse héliocentrique; refus de toute autorité en matière de philosophie; adoption d'un système atomistique à tendances matérialistes et d'un scepticisme radicalement négateur; séparation de la raison et de la foi, mais organisation de la raison pour combattre toutes les formes du surnaturel et pour assurer à la conduite humaine une pleine autonomie; appel à toutes les inspirations du paganisme [. . .] Ils avaient songé, eux, à utiliser tout ce qu'avait produit le XVIe siècle incrédule, à l'étendre, à l'enrichir, pour en faire la philosophie des temps nouveaux [. . .] [3]

Certain examples of Pintard's outline of this philosophy can be seen in the Francion. For example, the central character attempts to teach his nouvelle philosophie at Court and when some of those he tells reject it, he attributes this to their customary stupidity, and refuses to be upset by it, or swayed from his opinion.[4] In this way, and by his actions throughout the work, Francion declares his independance as a thinker in moral and philosophical matters. His negative attitude towards his fellow man is shown in the above instance, and when he declares that all men "n'ont plus rien maintenant d'humain que la figure".[5] Francion's personal refusal to accept the supernatural is exemplified in the pitiful rite of invoking demons which he asks Valentin to perform and by the fact that Francion does

---

[3] Ibid., I, 567-568.

[4] Francion, p. 269.

[5] Ibid., p. 252.

this while disguised as a religious pilgrim.[6] Francion appears sure in his own mind that no supernatural power exists and neither fears the wrath of God for his actions, nor expects any demons to come to aid Valentin, since he must arrange for him to be waylaid by a human.[7] Francion also draws on pagan observances for support of his opinion during the discussion at the orgy of death customs in certain cultures.[8] In these examples, we can see the influence of libertine ideas on the thoughts and behavior of Francion in the novel.

The libertins, still influenced by the humanist ideas of the Renaissance, found themselves in direct conflict with the growing power of the Catholic Church and of the fundamental values of bourgeois society at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The movement was particularily active in 1621 and 1622 and gradually lost ground to a conformist tendency in the society of the time.

L'Histoire comique de Francion was published for the first time in 1623 and Sorel was a friend of the libertin Théophile de Viau. These two writers and others collaborated on the composition of the Ballet des Bacchanales, which was also published in 1623. Antoine Adam notes the influence

---

[6] Ibid., pp. 66-69.

[7] Ibid., pp. 69-70.

[8] Ibid., pp. 306-307, 314.

that Théophile could have exercised on the young Sorel. Adam feels that Sorel uses the events in the life of Francion to outline his own philosophy, which coincides with Théophile's teachings in the early 1620's.[9] He also describes the Francion itself in the following terms:

> [l']histoire d'un hardi pourfendeur de préjugés et redresseur de torts, qui dit leur fait à tous les puissants, à tous les brutaux, à tous ceux aussi qui maintiennent la religion et la morale traditionnelles.[10]

His whole attitude to life reflects an independent spirit; he judges things for himself rather than simply accepting ideas because they are traditional or sanctioned by any institution, and naturally he applies this philosophy to his sexual behavior as well as in all other facets of his life.

Another aspect of Francion's character seems at first glance to be very traditional, but really implies strong individualism. This is his youthful interest in the heroic ideal. In this concept, we see the idealisation of the isolated individual fighting for justice against all manner of scoundrels and evil-doers. The novels of chivalry which Francion read incorporate this quality, even more than the historic chivalry they purported to portray.

Francion's independent line of thought shows up even more clearly in other areas of his personal philosophy of

---

[9] Adam, Théophile de Viau et la libre pensée française en 1620 (n.d.; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, n.d.), p. 299.

[10] Ibid., p. 297.

life. He approaches most problems with an individual, rational and analytical attitude.

Because he sees himself as an individual, distinct from all others, Francion is reluctant to use the name of Nays' beloved Floriandre, to initiate his courting of her. He explains clearly that:

> Je ne pourrois pas me resoudre a cela, repartit Francion: car il me semble que de se donner le nom d'autruy, c'est confesser que l'on n'a rien en soy de si recommandable que celuy là.
> (Francion, p. 324)

He does in the end adopt this subterfuge, but only because he reasons it to be a logical way of getting to see Nays, even if she quickly realizes that he is not Floriandre. Francion never doubts his own identity and thus he can affirm his own individuality in virtually any situation.

The judgements he makes in less unusual situations also show Francion's tendency towards individualism and libertinage; the way of life he chooses would not be theoretically repudiated by Gassendi nor by Descartes, who according to Léon Brunschvicg in his study of Descartes et Pascal, Lecteurs de Montaigne, thought that:

> On ne s'affranchit pas par personne interposée; chacun doit pratiquer pour son propre compte la chasse aux préjugés en explorant "le grand livre du monde". [11]

It is interesting to note that Francion expresses himself in

---

11 L. Brunschvicg, Descartes et Pascal, Lecteurs de Montaigne (Neuchâtel: Editions de la Baconnière, 1945), p. 106.

very similar terms when he states:

> Le plus beau livre que vous puissiez voir, [. . .] c'est l'experience du monde.
> (Francion, p. 455)

Francion certainly values his liberty highly and seeks out a wide range of experiences. His travels are a source of such experiences, but it is his open mind which permits him to enjoy them and to increase his knowledge of the world with adventures such as his life as a shepherd.

Francion has successfully escaped many of the prejudices of the society in which he lived, by using his reason to resolve problems or issues, instead of accepting the conventional answers. This attitude is remarkably similar to that of Descartes, as shown by Emile Thouverey's comments in the "Introduction" to the Méditations métaphysiques:

> [La] grande prétention était de philosopher comme s'il n'y avait jamais eu de philosophes avant lui. [. . .] Ce qui reste vrai, c'est qu'il a apporté une méthode nouvelle, qui partait de ce principe: se délier du joug de la tradition, n'accepter pour vrai que ce qui paraît évidemment être tel [. . .][12]

In the same vein, Francion declares that he had developped a new humanist philosophy, but that it was not easily accepted by others:

> En ce temps là j'estudiay a toute reste, mais

---

12 E. Thouverey, "Introduction" to René Descartes, Les Méditations métaphysiques avec une introduction, des notes et un appendice par Emile Thouverey (Paris: Librairie Classique Eugène Belin, 1899), p. 63.

> d'une façon nouvelle, neantmoins la plus belle de toutes; je ne faisois autre chose que philosopher, et que mediter sur l'estat des humains, sur ce qu'il leur faudroit faire pour vivre en repos, et encore sur un autre poinct bien plus delicat, touchant lequel j'ay desja tracé le commencement d'un certain discours, que je vous communiqueray; je vous laisse a juger, si cela n'estoit pas cause que j'avois davantage en horreur le commerce des hommes: car deslors je trouvay le moyen de les faire vivre comme des Dieux, s'ils vouloient suivre mon Conseil.
>
> Toutefois puisqu'il faut essayer d'estouffer le desir des choses qui ne se peuvent, je ne songeay plus qu'a procurer le contentement de moy seul.
>
> (Francion, pp. 244-245)

This is the thinking of a man who refuses to accept society's dictates when they run counter to his own ideas. Francion's ideas are also similar in the above area to those advanced by Epicurus, a third-century Greek philosopher who stated that:

> Hence we should make a practice of the things that make for happiness for assuredly when we have this we have everything and we do everything we can to get it when we don't have it.[13]

Francion's attitude towards his own death is influenced by his individualism. He accepts the fact that he, like everyone, will have to die. This is a logical realisation that most people are incapable of accepting on a personal level. For Francion, the important thing to consider is not his death, but his life, which he can and ought to control. On this subject, Francion's ideas are in

---

[13] Epicurus, "Letter to Menoeceus", in The Philosophy of Epicurus. Translated with commentary and introduction by George K. Strodach. (n.p.: Northwestern University Press, 1963) p. 178.

even closer parallel to those advanced by Epicurus, who saw death as nothing to fear at all. He outlines his conception of death as follows:

> [Y]ou should accustom yourself to believing death means nothing to us, since every good and evil lies in sensation; but death is the privation of sensation. [. . .] There is nothing fearful in living for the person who has really laid hold of the fact that there is nothing fearful in not living. [. . .] As in the case of food [the sophisticated person] prefers the most savory dish to merely the larger portion, so in the case of time he garners to himself the most agreeable moments rather than the longest span.[14]

Francion's friend Raymond recognizes the former's unshakable attitude to life and death. He feels so sure Francion is secure enough to confront the possibility of inevitable and immediate death without suffering traumatic fear, that he makes a practical joke of death and excuses his actions with the simple declaration:

> J'avois tant de bonne opinion de la constance de vostre ame, que je sçavois bien que les asseurances que l'on vous donneroit de vostre mort, ne vous causeroient point de maladies.
> (Francion, p. 308)

Francion's attitude contrasts sharply with the fear of death suffered by most of the other characters in the novel. Their reaction is typical of the society of the time, even though its Christian basis would promise eternal life to the true believer. Agathe, like Francion, seems very little worried by the idea of death; she demonstrates a very

---

[14] Ibid., pp. 178-180.

liberal moral non-conformism. She also speaks in a disparaging way of the inconsiderate Creator who would commit "[l]'injustice de [l]'avoir mise au monde pour y vivre, sans [lui] permettre de prendre les choses dont l'on y vit",[15] and she intends to use this argument to justify her actions if she is called to account after her death.

In agreement with his philosophy which encourages him to enjoy his existence as long as he possesses life, Francion expresses opinions on marriage and sexuality that reflect an independent point of view. The clearest statement of Francion's views on this subjects are his declarations at Raymond's banquet, which we will discuss in the chapter entitled "Life and Death in Francion's Philosophy",[16] and in which he proclaims it unreasonable to demand monogamy and life-long fidelity from constantly changing individuals. He prefers a system of free love for everyone. Although the idea is found even in such a work as Plato's Republic,[17] it is so idealistic as to be impossible to put into practice. Even Francion recognizes this fact, at least for the immediate future:

> Après que Francion eut ainsi parlé, Raymond et Agathe approuverent ses raisons, et luy dirent

---

[15] Francion, p. 125.

[16] See also Francion, p. 316.

[17] Maurice Croiset, La République de Platon, étude et analyse par M. Croiset (Paris: Mellottée, 1946), pp. 191-197.

> qu'il falloit pour ceste heure là, qu'il se contentat de jouyr seulement de Laurette; il respondit qu'il tascheroit de le faire.
> (Francion, p. 316)

In his comprehensive work, La Pensée italienne au XVIe siècle et le courant libertin, Charbonnel indicates that Giordano Bruno held a similar philosophical position in that:

> Après avoir rabaissé la virginité, comme pour faire pièce au christianisme, Bruno exalte la polygamie, plus conforme aux nécessités de la reproduction. [18]

Francion applies this principle as much as possible to his own life. In the context of a small group of friends, it is possible for an individual to reject the values imposed by society, but Francion is wise enough to see that the great majority of his contemporaries will not accept his ideas.

Michel de Montaigne, moderate in his views when compared with Francion or the libertins, nevertheless indicates in his Essais that the reality of marriage does not correspond with the ideal that it is represented to be and that it generally has little to do with love. Montaigne does not oppose marriage as an institution, because it serves the needs of society, even if it is not the ideal situation for the individual. His judgement on the subject is as follows:

---

[18] J.-Roger Charbonnel, La Pensée italienne au XVIe siècle et le courant libertin (Paris, 1919; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1969), p. 563.

> On ne se marie pas pour soy, quoi qu'on die; on se marie autant ou plus pour sa posterité, pour sa famille. L'usage et interest du mariage touche nostre race bien loing par delà nous. [. . .] Je ne vois point de mariages qui faillent plustost et se troublent que ceux qui s'acheminent par la beauté et desirs amoureux. Il faut des fondemens plus solides et plus constans, et y marcher d'aguet; cette bouillante allegresse n'y vaut rien. [19]

Individualists would be quick to object to this sublimation of self for the benefit of one's family and one's progeny, or even for that of society as a whole.

Obviously, Francion's dislike of marriage is based on more than just a desire for freedom to love many women in the course of his life. (This point is confirmed by his decision to marry Nays, with the expectation of either being able to continue relationships with women such as Emilie, or that he can maintain his fidelity to his wife and is willing to accept this limitation on his freedom.) In his search for freedom to travel and to spend his time and money as he liked, without the limitations of marital responsibilities, he was not alone. Descartes, Théophile, Naudé and so many others, including Sorel, never married.

Francion's open mind does not permit him to judge good and bad according to traditional moral values. He sees sexual freedom part of the normal state of affairs. Thus, he finds himself in conflict with the values accepted by the

---

[19] Montaigne, Essais. Nouvelle édition conforme au texte de l'exemplaire de Bordeaux[. . .] (Paris: Garnier, 1941-1942), III, book 3, chapter 5, p. 69.

bourgeoisie, concerning chastity, religion and fidelity within marriage. Therefore, Francion never criticises Agathe for her work as a procurer, and Sorel even describes her as a "gentille vieille".[20] With much the same open-minded attitude, Francion considers Laurette worthy of his attentions since she is a beautiful woman, and even after Agathe's account of her many sexual adventures and her avarice, his intentions do not change:

> Estes vous content a ceste heure, Francion? Voyla tout ce que je vous puis dire de vostre maistresse. L'aymez vous encore aussi ardamment que vous faisiez?
>
> Je suis plus son serviteur que jamais, respondit Francion. [. . .] Ira t'elle aymer un sot dont elle verra les pistolles plus tost que la personne mesme, qui je m'asseure bien n'a aucun merite puis qu'en un mot c'est un Financier. Hal mon amy Francion, reprit Agathe, vous sçavez bien quelle puissance je vous ay dit que l'argent a sur l'esprit de Laurette. Ouy, mais elle est femme, repartit Francion, et n'est pas insensible aux plaisirs qu'on reçoit avec une personne dont le merite est agreable. Il se peut bien faire que pour attrapper quelques ducats, elle se layssera en proye aux desirs d'un badault: mais elle ne le cherira pas pourtant, et quand elle verra sa bourse vuide, elle se vuidera pareillement de l'affection qu'elle aura feint de luy porter. Faites du pis que vous pourrez, Agathe, aussi tost que le moule de mon tymbre sera guery de sa playe, j'iray voir secrettement ma maistresse et recevray d'elle tout ce que je sçaurois desirer.
>
> (Francion, pp. 137-138)

Francion's interpretation would seem to indicate that he sees Laurette's desire for pleasure as stronger than her avarice. Also, he seems willing to seek pleasure in her

---

20 Francion, p. 139.

beauty without regard to considerations of honour which might discourage other men.

Francion is not so indulgent with everyone. He criticises those whose actions he considers unworthy, even if their activities are not criminal and are condoned by society as a whole. From Francion's point of view, high social class does not licence poor behavior. He may be realistically forced to accept certain actions from people of low social or economic class, but such activities are inexcusable for the nobility and other privileged groups, and cannot be overlooked. A Rastignac of his acquaintance ignores social conventions in order to obtain, solely by his financial worth, the respect of others. The social-climber in question is a young man Francion knew in school and whose father is, according to Francion, "un des plus vilains usuriers et mercadents du monde".[21] Evidently the young man purchased his position as Conseiller, which in no way lowered him in the eyes of those with whom he works. One even explains to Francion that he should treat him with more respect "veu la qualité du personnage".[22] The discussion continues between Francion and the solliciteur on the theme of nobility and money:

> Comment, vous dites donc qu'il est conseiller, luy respondis je, hé certainement il y a bien plus de

---

[21] Ibid., p. 215.

[22] Ibid., p. 217.

> sottise que de conseil dans sa teste. La Cour ne l'auroit pas receu en ceste dignité, repliqua le solliciteur, si elle ne l'avoit treuvé capable de la tenir. Si est ce que l'on l'a tousjours estimé le plus grand asne de l'Université, ce dis-je, et quelque office qu'il ayt, je pense bien estre davantage que luy. N'ayez pas ceste vanité là, dit le solliciteur. Ce ne m'est point une vanité, respondis je: car je suis des plus nobles de France, et luy n'est fils que d'un vil Marchand. Sa charge l'ennoblit, repliqua le solliciteur: et comment a t'il cette charge? dis je alors; par son argent, respondit le solliciteur. Tellement que le plus abject du monde, ce dis je, aura une telle qualité, et se fera ainsi respecter moyennant qu'il ait de l'argent. Ah bon Dieu, quelle villenie: Comment est ce donc que l'on recognoit maintenant la vertu.
>
> (Francion, p. 217)

Francion certainly does not share the opinion of the solliciteur that this unworthy person is ennobled by his position. Later the same day, after seeing the Conseiller dressed as a gentilhomme, Francion clearly expresses his disdain of the noblesse de robe:

> [J]e vy passer par la ruë mon jeune badault de Conseiller, mais en quel equipage pensez vous? En equipage de seigneur. Jamais je ne fus plus estonné. [. . .] Je m'enquis de mon hoste, si a Paris les hommes de robbe longue estoient aussi hommes d'espée. Il me respondit que de jeunes gens comme le Conseiller que je venois de voir, ne prenoient la robbe, que pour avoir une qualité qui les fit respecter, et trouver des femmes qui eussent de grands avantages, et que leur age les portant aux gentillesses de Cour, estans hors du Palais ils se licentioient de prendre aucunesfois l'espée et l'habit de Cavalier.
>
> Me voyant en la misere où j'étois, j'eusse souhaitté d'estre de ce beau mestier, dont mon Pere m'avoit voulu faire, n'eust esté que j'estimois que ce m'eust esté un des-honneur d'estre en la compagnie de personnes si viles.
>
> (Francion, pp. 217-218)

Thus, Francion's judgements of people are usually based on their true moral worth rather than their social standing,

which generally is the criteria of "nobility" for society as a whole. The independence of his way of thinking appears to illustrate the marked difference between himself and society in general.

Francion and the libertins also raised many objections to society's institutions, such as the Church. Reformers working within such institutions inadvertantly provided arguments which the libertins could use to support their criticism. Even the extremly religious Pascal, by his use of reason in an attempt to lead libertins to belief in God, succeeded in increasing the prestige of human reason and very many libertins were not prepared to accept Pascal's pari. This attitude was shared by Francion, according to William Coyle's interpretation:

> Francion n'accepte pas le saut pascalien vers Dieu. Au lieu de viser à la transcendance, il essaye de s'unir à ce monde mouvementé, de s'intégrer à ce devenir éternel. Il cherche son repos dans l'acceptation ardente de sa prison. [23]

Francion's criticisms of religion are veiled, although still visible to the attentive reader. Many libertins, having placed in doubt doctrines and practices of the Church, were accused of atheism, but they nevertheless found it advisable not to publish their beliefs with perfect candor. This prudent attitude became more and more necessary as the Church grew in power. In contrast, there are several

---

[23] W. Coyle, "L'Heure sorelienne" (lecture), quoted by Knystautas, "Charles Sorel", pp. 249-250.

passages in the Francion which evidence an independent and unorthodox attitude toward the Catholic Church. For example, during Raymond's banquet, Raymond does not allow one of his guests to tell the story of a village priest who "aimoit autant la compagnie d'une femme, que celle de son breviaire",[24] in the following way:

> Je vous supplie, Monsieur, de ne point achever, dit alors Raymond, il ne faut point parler de ces gents là, s'ils peschent, c'est a leur Evesque a les en reprendre, non pas a nous. Si vous en mesdisiez, vous seriez excommunié, et banny d'un lieu où vous ne vous souciez guiere d'y entrer. Ne soyez plus si osé que de retomber sur ce subjet.
> (Francion, p. 313)

Such a restriction does not seem in keeping with the spirit of the gathering. It appears, however, that this rebuke is aimed at permitting anti-clerical criticism under the guise of avoiding it. The text continues with the articulation of ideas which hide elements of atheism.

> Le gentil-homme s'estant teu, et toute la compagnie ayant trouvé la defence de parler des Prestres, faite fort a propos, veu que l'on a desja tant parlé d'eux, que l'on n'en sçauroit plus dire que l'on n'en a dit, se delibera de ne pas songer seulement qu'il y en eut au monde. Aussi bien y a t'il assez d'autres conditions a reprendre, dont procede la depravation du siecle. L'on entama donc des discours sur une autre matiere.
> (Francion, pp. 313-314)

It is significant that the 1623 text, which we have just quoted, was considerably altered in the 1626 edition of the novel. The words "et banny d'un lieu où vous ne vous souciez

---

[24] Francion, p. 313.

guiere d'y entrer" were replaced by "et l'on vous mettroit au nombre de ces libertins du siecle a qui l'on a tant fait la guerre".[25] The same intention on the part of the author to attenuate the original text, leads him to add a long digression after the new text.[26] He ends this digression with a real profession of faith in l'honnêteté:

> Raymond avoit bien toutes ces considerations, mais outre cela il alleguoit que les esprits foibles croyent tout ce que l'on leur apprend, sans aprofondir les choses, et qu'il est toujours bon de peur de scandale de ne point parler en mal des Ministres des choses sacrées. J'ay tousjours esté d'un semblable avis, et l'on ne remarquera point que dans toute cette Histoire je mesdise

---

[25] Ibid., p. 1314.

[26] A la naissance des heresies, tout le monde se mesloit de parler d'eux. Un conte n'estoit point facetieux si l'on n'y parloit d'un prestre. Erasme, Rabelais, la Reyne de Navarre, Marot et plusieurs autres se sont pleus en cette gausserie, et auparavant plusieurs Italiens s'en sont meslez. Toutefois il faut avouer que cela n'a pas le pouvoir de divertir une bonne ame du Sentier de la Foy, et que quand l'on nous monstreroit que nos Prestres seroient fors vicieux, ce n'est pas a dire que nostre Religion fust mauvaise. Aussi Boccace qui avoit un tres bel esprit, en une sienne nouvelle excuse tacitement toutes les autres qui parlent des gens d'Eglise, ce que peu de personnes ont possible remarqué. Il raconte qu'un Juif ayant veu a Rome la mauvaise vie des Prestres et des moines, ne laissa pas de se faire Chrestien, disant qu'il voyoit bien que nostre Religion estoit la meilleure puisqu'elle subsistoit et se fortifioit chaque jour malgré nos desbordemens et qu'il faloit necessairement que Dieu en eust un soin particulier. Raymond avoit bien toutes ces considerations, mais outre cela il alleguoit que les esprits foibles croyent tout ce que l'on leur apprend, sans aprofondir les choses, et qu'il est toujours bon de peur de scandale de ne point parler en mal des Ministres des choses sacrées. J'ay tousjours esté d'un semblable avis, et l'on ne remarquera point que dans toute cette Histoire je mesdise aucunement des Prestres: Le discours en estant donc rompu, l'on en fit d'autres sur differentes matieres.
(Francion, p. 1314)

> aucunement des Prestres: Le discours en estant donc rompu, l'on en fit d'autres sur differentes matieres.
>
> (Francion, p. 1314)

In Francion's dream,[27] there are also allusions to concepts which are contrary to the teaching of the Church, such as Francion's imaginary death taking him to either a Paradise of debauchery or a Hell of pleasures. This detailed dream is also the opportunity to question the geocentric conception of the universe approved by the Church, by subjecting it to a burlesque interpretation. The contrast in the two systems is only emphasised when the universe is compared to a child's toy, for the amusement of the gods, as the Hermit explains it to Francion:

> Ce sont des Dieux, me respondit il avec une parole assez courtoise. Ils s'exercent a faire tenir la Sphere du Monde en son mouvement ordinaire. Vous en verrez tantost d'autres qui se reposent maintenant, les venir relever de leur peine. Mais comment, ce dis je, font ils tourner la Sphere: N'avez vous jamais veu, reprit il, une noix percée et un baston mis dedans avec une corde qui fait tourner un moulinet quand l'on la tire! Ouy da, luy respondis je, lorsque j'estois petit enfant, c'estoit là mon passetemps coustumier. Ho bien, dit l'Hermite, representez vous que la terre qui est stable est une noix, car elle est percée de mesme, par ce que l'on appelle l'essieu qui va d'un pole a l'autre, et cette corde c'y est attachée au mitan, de sorte qu'en la tirant l'on fait tourner le premier Ciel qui en certains lieux a des crenaux qui se rencontrans dans les trous d'un autre, le font mouvoir d'un pas plus viste ainsi qu'il donne encore le bransle a ceux qui sont apres luy.
>
> (Francion, p. 144)

---

[27] Francion, pp. 140-154.

The passage concerning the existence of a "raw material" for souls in a giant pool, filled with the excrements of the Gods[28] is not a doctrine which could be accepted by the Catholic Church. As Antoine Adam points out,[29] this implies that souls are made of matter and are not a divine creation from nothingness. The literary fiction of the dream protects Francion, as well as the author Sorel, because dreams are distortions of one's beliefs and experiences, and as such can never be considered a voluntary expression of the ideas of the author or creator.

Francion's opinions about the Church appear to show a parallel between the official doctrine of the Church and the illusion and trickery he encounters in the secular world. Through the use of reason, one can defeat illusions and trickery, and therefore the libertins sought support from the works of contemporary philosophers, as Jean Charron shows us by using an example in his work entitled The "Wisdom" of Pierre Charron: An Original and Unorthodox Code of Morality:

> The Sagesse was more suited to the purpose of the libertins [than the Essais of Montaigne] because of its very detailed and precise plan, in which propositions and discussions followed each other

---

[28] Ibid. p. 143.

[29] Adam, Théophile de Viau, p. 300.

clearly and in carefully arranged sequence. [30]

Francion seems determined to follow his own way, independent of society and relying on his own system of values and morals.

The imperfections of some institutions in seventeenth century French society were very evident. For example, the observant and individualistic Sorel sharply criticises the educational system of which Francion is a part. One of the most important judgements which he makes on this subject is the following:

> Ne vous estonnez point si j'aymois mieux lire que d'escouter mon Regent, car c'estoit le plus grand asne qui jamais monta en chaire. Il ne nous contoit que des sornettes, et nous faisoit employer nostre temps en beaucoup de choses inutiles, nous commandant d'apprendre mille grimauderies les plus pedantesques du monde. Nous disputions fort et ferme pour les places, et nous demandions des questions l'un a l'autre, mais quelles questions pensez vous: quelle est l'etymologie de Luna, et faloit respondre que ce mot se dit, Quasi luce lucens aliena: comme qui diroit en François, que chemise se dit, quasi sur chair mise: n'est pas là une belle doctrine pour abreuver une jeune ame? Cependant nous passions les journées sur de semblables badineries, et celuy qui respondoit le mieux là dessus portoit la qualité d'Empereur. Quelquefois ce sot Pedant nous donnoit des vers a faire et enduroit que nous en prissions de tous entiers de Virgile, pour le mieux imiter, et que nous nous servissions encore, pour parfaire les autres, de certains bouquins, comme de Parnasse et du Textor. S'il nous donnoit a composer en Prose, nous nous aydions tout de mesme de quelques livres de mesme estoffe, dont nous tirions toutes sortes de pieces pour en faire

---

[30] J. Charron, The "Wisdom" of Pierre Charron: An Original and Unorthodox Code of Morality (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1961), p. 116.

> une capilotade a la pedantesque: cela n'estoit il pas bien propre a former nostre esprit et ouvrir nostre jugement? Quelle vilennie de voir qu'il n'y a plus que de barbares dans les Universitez pour enseigner la jeunesse? Ne devroient ils pas considerer, qu'il faut de bonne heure apprendre aux enfants a inventer quelque chose d'eux mesmes, non pas de les r'envoyer a des recueils a quoy ils s'attendent, et s'engourdissent tandis? [. . .] Mon Dieu, que les peres sont trompez, pensant avoir donnez leurs fils a des hommes qui les rempliront d'une bonne et profitable science!
> (Francion, pp. 183-184)

He shares these sentiments with Montaigne, who declared in his essay entitled "De l'Institution des enfans" that:

> Qu'il ne luy [à l'enfant] demande pas seulement compte des mots de sa leçon, mais du sens et de la substance, et qu'il juge du profit qu'il aura fait, non par le tesmoignage de sa memoire, mais de sa vie. Que ce qu'il viendra d'apprendre, il le lui face mettre en cent visages et accommoder à autant de divers subjets, pour voir s'il l'a encore bien pris et bien faict sien, prenant l'instruction de son progrez des paedagogismes de Platon. C'est tesmoignage de crudité et indigestion que de regorger la viande comme on l'a avallée. L'estomac n'a pas faict son operation, s'il n'a faict changer la façon et la forme à ce qu'on luy avoit donné à cuire. [. . .]
> Le guain de nostre estude, c'est en estre devenu meilleur et plus sage. [31]

The most notable of the attitudes which Francion shares with society is probably his horror of old age, as will be discussed in our chapter entitled "The Living Death". For Francion, this aversion is not founded solely on physical deterioration, but primarily on mental and sexual degeneration, resulting in the ostracism of the individual from society. Although Agathe has absolutely no physical

---

[31] Montaigne, Essais, I, book 1, chapter 26, pp. 161-162.

attractions, Francion finds her company agreable because she has retained youthful attitudes and still shows a profound interest in enjoying life.[32]

At the same time as he entertains us, Sorel succeeds in communicating a philosophical message, which is quite clearly expressed for the era. In successive editions, the most controversial passages were attenuated, modified or deleted entirely. For example, Agathe's story of her licentious life and of Laurette's adventures[33] became more and more objectionable as the power of the Church increased. In the 1633 edition, Sorel adds the following passage, to preserve at least the appearance of his declared interest in moralising:

> Nous avons veu icy parler Agathe en termes fort libertins; mais la naïfveté de la Comedie veut cela, afin de bien representer le personnage qu'elle fait. Cela n'est pourtant pas capable de nous porter au vice; car au contraire cela rend le vice hayssable, le voyant depeint de toutes ses couleurs. Nous aprenons icy que ce que plusieurs prennent pour des delices n'est rien qu'une desbauche brutale dont les esprits bien sensez se retireront tousjours.
> (Francion, p. 1276)

He did not suppress the offending section, but simply tried to give it a moral interpretation, which, if one considers the length of Agathe's description and the brevity of the disclaimer, is difficult to accept. This indicates to us

---

[32] Francion, pp. 103, 104, 139; see also the chapter of this thesis entitled "The Living Death", pp. 122-149.

[33] Francion, pp. 104-138.

that Sorel considered such commentaries and critiques an essential part of his novel, and that although he was willing to sacrifice some of the joking sexual references, he believed his more dangerous criticisms of society and religion had to remain.

Thus, neither Sorel nor his character Francion seem prepared to abandon the independent line of thought they have adopted. In the true libertin tradition, both illustrate a great faith in the powers of human reason and the right of each individual to make his own judgements, free of the shackles of the opinions of others. In the Francion, Sorel appears to be presenting this philosophy in a variety of ways, ranging from direct speech by the characters to the example of their actions.

Chapter 3

The Influence of Several Literary Styles on the Francion

Sorel adopted elements of several literary styles when he wrote L'Histoire comique de Francion. There is evidence of influence by the picaresque and chevalresque novels and the beginnings of a realist style, but the influence of the baroque and burlesque styles appears throughout the novel. Both of the latter styles were of great importance to early seventeenth-century French literature, although the countervailing force of the classic school was to become stronger following the publication of the first edition of the Francion in 1623.

The popularity of the baroque style in France spanned the division between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with its period of strongest influence ending about 1630. Jean-François Maillard outlines the roots of baroque in his recent study entitled Essai sur l'esprit du héros baroque, as follows:

> Historiquement, l'ère baroque constate la rupture définitive, amorcée par la Renaissance, des structures qui englobaient l'individu dans un

> réseau de relations: religion, société féodale, constituée par les cellules harmonieuses des ordres et de l'unité villageoise.[1]

At a time of such deep-rooted social change, it does not seem surprising to find evidences of emotional and philosophical upheaval, and unorthodox ideas, in literature, which reflects the concerns and attitudes of the society which produces it.

Baroque style is a mixture of many varied elements, which makes it difficult to formulate an adequate definition for it. It encompasses the ideas of constant change, unreliability and instability along with the all-important concept of illusion. It also includes an emphasis on the rapid and inexorable passage of time and on the phenomenon of death. In this way, death becomes an integral part of baroque literature:

> la mort [. . .] se joue comme un spectacle théâtral qui fait de la vie un déguisement de la mort et de la mort une figure vivante.[2]

The discussion of death becomes virtually unavoidable, since life must be dealt with in literature and the two themes of life and death are inseparably linked. We will see examples in later chapters of the super-imposing of the image of death on living persons in the Francion itself.

---

[1] J.-F. Maillard, Essai sur l'esprit du héros baroque (Paris: A. G. Nizet, 1973), p. 13.

[2] Jean Rousset, La littérature de l'âge baroque en France. Circé et le Paon (Paris: José Corti, 1954), p. 183.

Jean Rousset provides us with a description of baroque style in his work La Littérature de l'âge baroque en France. Circé et le Paon:

> Qu'est-ce, en effet, qu'une façade baroque? C'est une façade renaissance plongée dans l'eau; plus exactement: son reflet dans une eau agitée.[3]

Interpreted as a metaphor, this description applies to baroque style in literature. Rousset describes the changeability of baroque literature as follows:

> Des âmes flottantes, des esprits fluides, qui donnent le spectacle d'un incessant va-et-vient; fidèles ou infidèles, tous changent ou rêvent de changer ou feignent de changer.[4]

Baroque works are characterized by movement, irregularities and the element of surprise, all of which features contrast with the relative calm of the Renaissance style, in both architecture and literature.

The beginning of the seventeenth century was an era of transformation. Social changes, the development of new religious sects, the increase in power and wealth of the new bourgeoisie, all served to make this era in France an unsettling one in which to live. Such an atmosphere leads to all sorts of thinking on the meaning and purpose of life. Those who lose their conviction that this life is only a preparation for the one to come, and are faced with a void in their existence, may seek to fill it with frenzied

---

[3] Ibid., p. 157.

[4] Ibid., p. 206.

activity, embellishments and complications of all sorts. In the Francion itself, we see constant activity as the hero moves from one situation to another, in each case encountering frequent turns of 'fate' which lead him to new and varied experiences. Maillard explains in his Essai sur l'esprit du héros baroque that:

> En fait, l'on ne tarde pas à remarquer que tous ces fastes s'accompagnent d'une impatience, voire d'une angoisse plus profonde, celle d'une société qui éprouve une horror vacui, une horreur du temps et de l'ennui. [. . .] Chaque jour est jour de fête: cette chasse au plaisir, seule évasion possible de l'ennui, tend à combler le vide de l'espace et du temps. [. . .] Le néant, phénomène de conscience nouveau, paraît bien dans un premier stade caractériser l'époque baroque.[5]

Without a purpose, life seems empty and frightening, and just as baroque architecture is characterized by details filling in virtually all otherwise unadorned spaces, so baroque literature portrays characters who attempt to fill in all the voids in their own lives with activity.

Change and sustained movement are apparent in the Francion. The lifestyle adopted by Francion involves constant change - change of locale, of financial or social circumstances, and so on. Francion's romantic infidelity is also typical of baroque literature; he readily forgets Laurette, who he had 'loved' so long, as soon as she surrenders herself to him:

> Francion ayant regardé en un instant qu'il s'estoit separé de Laurette, le pourtrait de Nays

---

[5] Maillard, p. 21.

> qu'il avoit toujours eu dans sa pochette, se souvint de s'enquerir de Dorini, où il avoit fait une si belle acquisition, et si ce visage parfait estoit une fantaisie de Peintre, ou une imitation de quelque ouvrage de nature
> (Francion, p. 323)

Francion's love for Laurette is real as long as he is with her, but he has previously accepted the 'reality' of his love for Nays, whom he knows only by what may be an illusory image -- a portrait. Upon leaving Laurette, Francion immediately seizes upon the 'reality' of his new love and prepares to search out Nays, still a fantasy-woman, to replace the flesh-and-blood one he has just possessed. He seems highly changeable in his affections and does not readily differentiate between the circumstances of his two loves.

The concepts of change and illusion also include the idea of metamorphasis. This theme is frequently symbolized in baroque literature by the magician Circé. With or without the aid of magic, metamorphasis involves a transformation such as that of an ugly old woman into a young and beautiful one. An example of such an apparent transformation occurs during Francion's dream. He related the episode in the following way:

> Je recontray seulement une vieille toute telle qu'Agathe en verité qui me dit, baisez moi, mon fils, je suis plus belle que ces effrontées que vous cherchez. Je la repoussay rudement, parce que j'estois mesme fasché de ce qu'une creature si laide parloit a moy: Mais comme j'eus le dos tourné, elle me dit, tu t'en repentiras, Francion. Alors que tu me voudras baiser, je ne voudray pas que tu me baises. Je portay mes yeux vers le lieu où estoit celle qui parloit a moy et apperceus a

> mon grand estonnement que ce n'estoit point une vieille, mais cette Laurette mesme pour qui je soupire.
>
> (Francion, p. 150)

The illusory nature of the 'real' beauty Francion sees in Laurette can be seen in this reference. Therefore, the metamorphosis represents a double reality -- that of Agathe (or any old woman) in the present and that of the beautiful Laurette in the future, when she too will be old.

The confusion of illusion and reality is a constant theme in baroque literature, not only in France, but in all of Europe. For instance, both Shakespeare in The Tempest and Calderon de la Barca in La Vida es sueño employ this as a central theme, and it is a recurring one in Sorel's Francion. As Maillard explains to us, in a baroque work,

> [L]a méditation commence par s'attacher à l'instabilité et à l'illusion de "toutes les choses mortelles" pour s'achever dans le dédoublement et le doute existentiel radical. Mieux qu'ailleurs on remarque qu'autour du thème de l'illusion s'agrège un faisceau de thèmes annexes qui s'y relient quasi structurellement. [6]

Francion is never deceived by illusion to such an extent as to doubt reality, but he is affected by it on several occasions, and does not always clearly differentiate between the two. Illusion is one of the factors in the instability of existence, and can become itself a way of life. Rousset tells us in his study on the baroque that:

> [L]'homme en mutation, l'homme multiforme, est

---

[6] Ibid., p. 43.

> fatalement amené à se concevoir comme l'homme du paraître. [7]

In such a situation, life itself becomes a game of illusions and appearances. Francion tries to avoid such a life, by trying to escape hypocrisy and society's restrictions, which impose certain attitudes or behavior on people.

However, in one episode, Francion lives virtually all aspects of his life as an illusion. He escapes the death intended for him by rival admirers of Nays and becomes a shepherd.[8] This role is very different from the one to which he is accustomed, but Francion seems to be happy with the situation, enjoying his freedom and taking advantage of the situation to seduce naive peasant girls. But he is really a French nobleman, and one day walks away from the illusory happiness of the shepherd's life. Francion is generally conscious of the difference between reality and illusion, but when it works to his advantage, he is prepared to accept this semi-reality and live with illusion for a time. We must note that he was never truly deceived by the illusion, but that those around him were, so that what he knows to be illusion appears as reality to the peasants he encounters.

Illusion is also definitely shown in Francion's dream, as discussed by Freudmann in his article "La Recherche passionnée du Francion":

---

[7] Rousset, p. 229.

[8] Francion, pp. 366-380.

> Les éléments instables du songe [de Francion] constituent aussi la texture du Francion tout entier. C'est sans doute ce qui explique pourquoi un rêve aussi long ne détonne pas. L'illusion règne également dans le monde de la réalité, univers glissant, déroutant, trompeur où l'on se berne à tout instant, où l'on se fait des friponneries, des fourbes, où l'on s'affronte, où l'on se donne des cassades, très souvent sous des déguisements. [9]

Francion blends fantasy and reality in his dream. He meets Agathe, Valentin and Laurette, but he also encounters gods who turn the earth by pulling on cords.

The element of illusion also appears in other parts of the novel, such as the first episode, where we see Francion and Catherine disguised, Oliver who profits by taking advantage of the dark of night to gain a favour intended for someone else, and the multiple conspiracy to trick poor Valentin.[10]

An even more concrete example of illusion is that offered by the use of cosmetics in an attempt to artificially enhance a woman's physical attractions. As Clérante explains to us:

> Si nous voulons passer nos jours parmy les delices de l'amour, nous trouverons en ces quartiers cy des jeunes beautez dont l'embompoint surpasse celuy de toutes les Courtisanes qui sont toutes couvertes de fard, et qui usent de mille inventions pour relever leur sein flasque. Je me souviens d'avoir couché avec quelques unes si maigres, que j'eusse autant aymé estre mis a la

---

[9] Felix R. Freudmann, "La Recherche passionée du Francion", Symposium, 21, no. 2 (1967), p. 113.

[10] Francion, p. 66 ff.

> gehenne, et a propos dernierement ceste Luce, je cogneus que sa beauté vient plus d'artifice que de nature; son corps n'est composé que d'os et de peau.
>
> (Francion, pp. 269-270)

Thus, one can use artificial devices to give the illusion of youth and beauty, in an attempt to avoid old age and the physical degeneration that are scorned and feared by most of the novel's characters.

Physical ugliness fascinates baroque authors, since they frequently make important commentaries on it. Ugliness is considered an irregularity of normal appearance, and its study is natural to baroque literature, which is interested in all that is unusual or abnormal. This interest is also a reaction to the idealisation of beauty seen in Renaissance writing. In the Francion, detailed descriptions such as the one of Agathe[11] illustrate this interest in ugliness. Such a reaction to ugliness perpetuates the value placed on appearances, even if this requires maintaining appearances by the use of illusions.

The baroque emphasis on change and the confusion of illusion and reality also involve a preoccupation with the rapid passing of time and with death. (Since death is the central topic of this thesis, specific examples of the treatment of death in the Francion will not be emphasised here, but can be found in other chapters.) The literature of

---

[11] Ibid., pp. 102-103.

the Renaissance tended to disguise the disagreeable reality of death,[12] but baroque writers choose to face it more realistically. For example, funeral rites are one of the devices any culture uses to shield its members from the reality of death, to allow itself to recover from the shock that anyone's death brings to those close to him. However, Agathe choses the simplest possible funeral for her friend and mentor, Perrette.[13] Sorel presents death as an unfortunate reality which must be faced and which may even be preferable to some levels of human existence.

Another baroque characteristic concerning death is to surround life with images of death. Jean Rousset tells us that, in the first half of the seventeenth century in France,

> loin de projeter sur la mort des images de vie, les hommes de ce temps se plaisent à s'entourer vivants des images de leur mort; leur regard s'exerce à deviner le squellette sous la chair; la tête de mort se multiplie dans les sombres paysages de leurs délires, sur la scène de leurs théâtres, dans leurs méditations comme sur les toiles de leurs peintres, et jusque dans la décoration.[14]

In Francion, this technique is applied to Agathe when a gentleman describes her as:

---

[12] Rousset, p. 92.

[13] Francion, pp. 125-126.

[14] Rousset, p. 102.

> ceste vieille, qui semble une piece antique du cabinet. [. . .] ce corps horrible. [. . .] ceste Sibylle Cumée. [. . .] [une] carcasse de mort. (Francion, p. 314)

In this way, the very much alive Agathe is compared to death itself, solely because of her advanced age. As well, even at a celebration of life such as Raymond's orgy, certain guests feel inclined to concentrate in this way on death. These factors constitute a very baroque element which is clearly present in the Francion.

In the course of our study thus far, we have seen that the Francion appears to have elements of several important baroque characteristics. However, burlesque style is another important influence in its composition. This literary style, which finds its roots in the writing of Greece and Rome, was popular in France during the first half of the seventeenth century. The fundamental form in burlesque is the travesty or parody of a well-known work or story. John Jump observes in his Burlesque that:

> High burlesque flourished in the Classical literature of Greece and Rome. The plays of Aristophanes contain parodies of Euripides and others. [15]

One can find this style in works of any genre, poetry, drama, prose, and even in the political pamphlets of the day.

Stylistic freedom and an immense vocabulary which

---

[15] J. D. Jump, Burlesque (London, Methuen, 1972), p. 37.

often includes slang or low levels of language, coarse language, technical or archaic words and even proverbs, none of which are frequently found in the more traditional French literature of the time, are characteristic of burlesque literature. As an example of this, we note that a passage in the Francion is written in Latin, to make fun of Hortensius.[16] It is interesting to observe that Sorel himself later criticises the use of words in literature which are not ordinarily acceptable in that field. In discussing this burlesque tendency in his Connoissance de bons livres, he writes:

> On a voulu tirer plus de divertissement de tels Ouvrages en y employant toutes les façons de parler facecieuses d'elles-mesmes, ou qui peuvent surprendre à cause qu'elles sont extraordinaires. (Marot et Saint-Gelais) usoient des termes qui avoient cours alors, et qui n'estoient point fantasques comme ceux qu'on a introduits dans la nouvelle maniere de Vers, où l'on fait entrer encore tout ce qu'on peut imaginer de badin et de niais pour les pensees, avec l'employ de tous les Proverbes ou Quolibets des Halles, et de quantité de mots anciens ou estrangers. [17]

However, Sorel had previously justified his use of such language in the Francion in his "Avertissement d'importance aux lecteurs" from the 1626 edition, in the following way:

> Outre cela je sçay bien que dans mon livre on peut trouver la langue Françoise toute entiere, et que

---

[16] Francion, p. 441.

[17] Sorel, Connoissance des Bons livres (Paris: Pralard, 1671), pp. 224-225, as quoted by Francis Bar, Le Genre Burlesque en France au XVIIe siècle, Etude de style (Paris: D'Artrey, 1960), p. xxxii.

> je n'ay point oublié les mots dont use le vulgaire, ce qui ne se void pas par tout, car dans les livres serieux l'on n'a pas la liberté de se plaire a cela et cependant, ces choses basses sont souvent plus agreables que les plus relevées.
> (Francion, p. 1262)

In fact, such language appears so frequently in the Francion that this was one of the sources of criticism of the work.[18] Sorel uses such language to describe Raymond's orgy, Agathe's physical ugliness and Francion's dream, to name only a few examples.

This use of coarse language is also related to another aspect of the literary influences on the Francion--that of realism. This style was not well-accepted at the beginning of the seventeenth century, since this was not an era interested in the common lives of ordinary or even bourgeois people. Chivalrous novels outlined the idealised lives of characters who were almost always of noble origin. Pastoral novels presented those of more ordinary people, but in such idealized surroundings as to make them almost unbelievable. However, the roman de moeurs describes a view of people who live in a more or less realistic society and who are of a more ordinary social class.

The Francion presents a noble hero, but one who has dealings with people of almost every class and not only with

---

[18] René Etiemble, "Un écrivain généreux: Charles Sorel", Hygiène des lettres, V: C'est le Bouquet (Paris: Gallimard, 1967, pp. 31, see also pp. 27-28; defends Sorel against this charge.

the nobility. He is acquainted with country folk, poor city dwellers (poets and prostitutes), bourgeois (Joconde), as well as other nobles. Sorel not only lets us see how one lives in Paris, but also in the small villages Francion visits; he even carefully describes a village wedding for us. As well, we see simple country folk, such as the boy who asks for the hand of a young servant girl in the following manner:

> Eul ma mere m'a parlé de vous. Et voyant qu'elle ne luy respondoit point, il luy repeta ces mesmes mots quatre ou cinq fois en luy tirant la main pour les luy faire entendre, croyant qu'elle dormist ou qu'elle ne songeast pas a luy. Je ne suis pas sourde, dit elle, je vous entends bien. C'est a cause de vous que j'ay mis une esguillette de var de mar a mon chappiau, car ma couraine m'a dit que c'est une couleur que vous raymez tant, que vous en avez usé trois cotillons. Ce darnier jour en allant aux vaignes je me destournay par le sangoy de plus de cent pas pour vous voir, mais je ne vous avisy point, et si toute la nuit je n'ay fait que songer de vous, tant je suis vostre serviteur; par la verti gué, j'ay voulu gager plus de cent fois contre mon biau frere Michault Croupiere, qu'a une journée de la grande haridelle de sa charure, il n'y a pas une fille qui soit de si belle regardure que vous qui estes la parle du pays en humidité, et en doux maintien. C'est qu'ou vous mocquez, reprit la servante, cela vous plaist a dire. Ho, non fait, luy dit le paysant. Ho, si est, respondit elle. Ho bien, reprit il, reventant tousjours a ses moutons, ma mere, heu ma mere m'a parlé de vous, comme je vous dy: si vous vous voulez marier vous n'avez qu'a dire.
>
> (Francion, pp. 273-274)

Sorel captures here not only the youth's awkwardness in the face of an unfamiliar situation, but also the language and the accent of the villager. Thus, we see that Sorel was a careful observer of human activities.

Sorel realistically shows us the good and bad aspects

of each class. Often nobles mistreat Francion (Raymond robs him and his rivals for Nays' love try to kill him), but lower-class people treat him well. Francion does not judge people on social class alone, but also on the basis of their characters and actions. As well, the chance of birth has not favoured him very well, since although of noble birth, he comes from an impoverished family.

Francion's lifestyle is complicated, but much more realistic than those of the knights of chivalry in novels. He acts according to his personal code of honour and according to his social class, but he is adventuresome enough to get to see the way other classes live. As well, Sorel chooses to present Francion in a variety of situations, including those where he contemplates his own death and that of others. Instead of hiding from this unpleasant reality, Francion recognizes it, accepts it and then also accepts the challenge to live, without being paralysed by the fear of death.

Perhaps Sorel regarded realism more as a devotion to truth and integrity than as a technique for a detailed study of a given situation. Thus, for example, Francion seeks an ideal woman, but in the end has to settle for a real, although very fine one.[19] In a practical sense, this acceptance of reality is more realistic than faithful

---

[19] Knystautas, p. 237.

reproductions of society in literary works.

Sorel's style in the Francion must be seen to be a mixture of several styles which were influential during the years when it was written. The author did not accept the limitations of rules any more than did his hero, and showed the possibility of writing a novel that did not fit any of the distinct styles of the time. Thus, he maintains his personal liberty and integrity throughout. The importance of the baroque and burlesque tendencies encouraged Sorel's exploration of death in many aspects -- as an image of life, as an illusion which could super-impose itself on life and as a natural function of living. The baroque especially, permitted the integration of death into all aspects of the novel because of the importance of the concepts of illusion and reality to this literary style.

Chapter 4

Francion's Heroic Ideal and his Image of Youth

During our study of the novel, it should always be remembered that Francion is a fictional character created by Sorel to express his own views in the novel. We have already seen that Sorel intended his work to be more than simply a relation of fictional episodes for entertainment, so it appears that some importance can be attached to the opinions and attitudes of the characters, and particularly to those of Francion himself.

Francion's heroic ideal appears throughout the novel, in stark contrast to his otherwise very practical philosophy of life. He generally seeks to live his life to the fullest, emphasizing his own immediate satisfaction and pleasure over any consideration for others. However, there is a certain idealistic thread that surfaces from time to time, in his words and actions, although this influence is rarely unadulterated. This idealism touches all aspects of Francion's existence, including his attitude toward death and the meaning of life.

One source of this heroic ideal seems to be

Francion's proud, if impoverished, noble background, which heightens his awareness of and devotion to a code of honor similar in many ways to that of chivalry. The tales of chivalry as well as Greek and Roman mythology provide another source of inspiration by providing the stories of action and adventure which first attracted Francion to this ideal.

The influence of the novels of chivalry begins early in Francion's life, when he is very impressionable. He was introduced to novels as a young student at a College in Paris. At this time, Francion received small sums of money from time to time from a lawyer, acting on behalf of Francion's father. Francion himself describes his use of the money in the following way:

> [. . .] de cet argent au lieu d'en jouër a la paume, j'en achetois de certains livres que l'on appelle des Romants, qui contenoient des prouësses des anciens Chevaliers.
> (Francion, p. 173-174.)

Thus, Francion's behavior is already differentiated from that of other young boys who preferred physical activity to study.

The reading of these novels appears to have been a very strong influence on the young man. The active imagination of youth, coupled with a natural desire to 'escape' the unpleasant confines of the school, provide a fertile ground for ideas in the young Francion's mind.

> C'estoit donc mon passe-temps que de lire des Chevaleries, et faut que je vous die que cela m'espoinçonnoit le courage, et me donnoit des

> desirs nompareils d'aller chercher les avantures par le monde. [. . .] Bref je n'avois plus en l'esprit que rencontres, que Tournois, que Chasteaux, que Vergers, qu'enchantements, que delices, et qu'amourettes: et lors que je me representois que tout cela n'estoit que 'fictions', je disois que l'on avoit tort neantmoins d'en censurer la lecture, et qu'il falloit faire en sorte que doresnavant l'on menast un pareil train de vie que celuy qui estoit descript dedans mes livres: là dessus je commençois souvent a blasmer les viles conditions a quoy les hommes s'occupent en ce siecle, lesquelles j'ay aujourd'huy en horreur tout a fait.
>
> (Francion, p. 174-175.)

Although he recognizes that 'tout cela n'estoit que fictions', the confusing worlds of reality and illusion of such characters as Don Quijote and Amadis de Gaule begin to influence Francion's vision of his own life. The stark reality of day-to-day living pales before the fascinating world of heroic adventure, and Francion, even when recounting these memories as an adult, maintains that he still holds 'aujourd'huy en horreur tout a fait' 'les viles conditions' which contemporary, flesh and blood men accept.

The young Francion attempts to build reality out of the fiction of these books. A fundamental change in the young man's behavior begins to take place:

> Cela m'avoit rendu meschant et fripon, et je ne tenois plus rien du tout de nostre pays, non pas mesmes les accents. [. . .] desja l'on me mettoit au nombre de ceux que l'on nomme des pestes, et je courois la nuit dans la Cour avec le nerf de boeuf dans mes chausses pour assaillir ceux qui alloient aux lieux pour parler par reverence. [. . .] Je ne craignois non plus le fouet que si ma peau eust esté de fer, et exerçois mille malices [. . .]
>
> (Francion, p. 175.)

Francion, in response to reading about the active lives of

the knights errant, tries to adapt their situation to his own. However, because of the limitations of his school and his youth, rather than helping anyone, he only gets into mischief. He does seem to think he is braver, however, since he no longer fears the pain of physical punishment or suffering.

Moreover, he is sorely disappointed that his own powers and experiences do not equal or surpass those of the heros of which he has read, and that he cannot live the life he has idealized.

> Le courage m'estant alors creu de beaucoup, je souspirois en moy mesme de ce que je n'avois encore faict aucun exploit de guerre, bien que je fusse a l'aage où les Chevaliers errans avoient desja defaict une infinité de leurs ennemis, et je ne vous sçaurois exprimer le regret que j'avois, de voir que mon pouvoir ne respondoit pas a ma volonté.
>
> (Francion, p. 183)

Even the young Francion can see some of the differences between the way of life of the knights and his own in the early seventeenth century. His youthful enthusiasm is frustrated by this contrast. However, he seems enthralled by the aspects of guerre and ennemis. It is now that the fascination with death and mortal struggle which is seen throughout the novel begins to appear.

It is also important to note the reference to the extreme youth of these chevaliers errans. Because of this, Francion begins to believe that all that is strong, admirable, and to be emulated, is linked to youth, physical strength, and beauty. At the same time, the opposing

qualities of old age, weakness, impotence and ugliness become repugnant to him. This aversion will also become a central theme of Francion's life-long attitudes, even when his ideas are much more pragmatically oriented than they are in his youth.

As Francion matures into a young gentleman of Paris, his noble ideas of chivalry are gradually tainted by the realities of life. For example, one day some pages waiting for their masters at the Louvre taunt, torment and insult the poorly-dressed Francion. He is called a "Bourgeois":

> car c'est l'injure que ceste canaille donne a ceux qu'elle estime niais, ou qui ne suivent point la Cour; infamie du siecle!
> (Francion, p. 218)

He proposes to defend his honour as he feels a man of his standing should -- with a sword (although he does not even possess one).

> Si vous n'avez envie de me gratifier me laissant mourir valeureusement estant sur ma defence, que quelqu'un de vous se despesche de me tuer, car aussi bien ne vivray je plus qu'a regret apres avoir enduré de si sensibles affronts que vous me faites, et si d'un autre costé j'ay des infortunes qui me font assez desirer la mort.
> (Francion, p. 219)

The idea of bravely defending one's honour to the death fits in perfectly with the heroic ideal. However, in this case, Francion proposes to do battle with a group he has already qualified as canaille, and thus undeserving of an honourable duel with a nobleman. Also, he renders his own willingness to courageously sacrifice his life for the sake of his honour questionable, when he refers to his

infortunes which make his life less and less pleasant in any case. This implicit 'death wish' not only depreciates the value of the ideals involved in the situation, but questions the doctrine of the Catholic Church concerning the sanctity of life. Throughout the novel we find such contrasting attitudes of idealism and practicality. Certainly this conflict lends another aspect to the otherwise quite pragmatic and even selfish attitude displayed by Francion on some occasions. It is one of the elements that transform a story which could otherwise descend to a level of pure debauchery.

Sorel emphasises the idealistic side of Francion's character in the 1633 edition of the Francion, when he adds the following passage at the time of Francion's departure from the DuBuisson household after curing the father of avarice:

> Il faisoit tout ce qui luy estoit possible pour rendre son voyage utile a plusieurs choses en mesme temps, et comme nous avons veu jusqu'a cette heure il ressembloit a ces Chevaliers dont nous avons tant d'Histoires, lesquels alloient de province en province, pour reparer les outrages, rendre la justice a tout le monde et corriger les vicieux. Il est vray que ses procedures n'estoient pas si sanglantes, mais elles en estoient plus estimables. Toutesfois sa vie eut encore du meslange depuis, et les plus reformez ne trouveront pas qu'elle ayt tousjours esté fort propre a retirer les autres du vice, mais quiconque pourra vivre mieux le fasse. Il faut sçavoir le bien et le mal pour choisir l'un et laisser l'autre.
>
> (Francion, p. 1320)

Francion demands the same exemplary behavior from others that he himself exhibits. For example, Francion is

attacked and very nearly killed one night by the criminal henchmen of Count Bajamond. The dishonorable death he barely escaped infuriates Francion, particularly since he knows it was a nobleman who sent them to attack him. When he meets the Count shortly thereafter, he minces no words concerning his injured honour and the need to put the situation to rights:

> L'ayant rencontré a quelque temps de là, je luy dis: Comte, avez vous oublié les vertus qu'un homme comme vous, qui fait profession de noblesse, doit ensuivre? Comment vous voulez faire assassiner la nuit vos ennemys par des voleurs; ne sçavez vous pas bien qui je suis, et qu'il ne se faut pas traitter en ceste façon? quand je serois mesme le plus infame de tout le peuple, le deviez vous faire? si nous avons quelque querelle, nous la pouvons vuider ensemble, sans nous aider du secours de personne.
> (Francion, p. 300)

In the ensuing duel, Francion conducts himself honourably and never attacks his adversary when the latter is at a disadvantage. Eventually, Bajamond is at Francion's mercy, but the latter chivalrously chooses to spare him.[1] Well aware of his own merite, Francion describes the recognition of others for his actions as follows:

> D'un autre costé l'on fit beaucoup d'estime de moy, (je le puis dire sans vanterie) et l'on admira la courtoisie dont j'avois usé envers mon ennemy, ne le voulant pas tuer, lors que je le pouvois faire, encore que les offences que j'avois receuës de sa part m'y conviassent: aussi falloit il certes que j'eusse beaucoup d'Empire alors sur

---

[1] Francion, p. 301.

> mon ame, pour l'empescher de se laisser mener par les impetuositez de sa colere.
> (Francion, p. 302)

Francion himself describes his attempt to apply his ideals to the conduct of others:

> Mon coustumier exercice estoit de chastier les sottises, de rabaisser les vanités et de me mocquer de l'ignorance des hommes. Les gens de Justice, de Finances, et de Traficq passoient journellement par mes mains, et vous ne sçauriez imaginer combien je prenois de plaisir a bailler des coups de baston sur le satin noir; ceux qui se disoient nobles et ne l'estoient pas, ne se trouvoient non plus exempts de ressentir les justes effets de ma colere. Je leur apprenois qu'estre Noble, ce n'est pas sçavoir bien picquer un Cheval, ny manier une espée, ny se pannader avec de riches accoustremens, et que c'est avoir une ame qui resiste a tous les assauts que luy peut livrer la fortune, et qui ne mesle rien de bas parmy ses actions.
> (Francion, p. 252)

Francion refuses to judge the moral or social rank of any person solely on the basis of his wealth or ostentatious clothing. He will not accept as noble anyone who does not have a certain strength of spirit and whose actions do not live up to the code of honour that Francion has set up for himself. However, it is interesting to note that he is criticizing others for concentrating on the superficial appearances rather than the true moral values of nobility, while he is also guilty of the same failing, particularly in his vanity and love of fine clothes. This particular problem was most evident when he was very young and could not afford

these luxuries.[2] At this time, he stayed home a great deal, tried to avoid the girl he loved and met only young poets who were as impoverished as he was, because he was ashamed of his appearance.

It must be noted that for Francion, true honour and nobility do not depend on either wealth or social rank attained by birth. Even the King himself is not respected by Francion for his hereditary position alone:

> [. . .] j'ayme encore mieux la rudesse de ce païsan a qui son compere disant qu'il quittast viste son labourage, s'il desiroit voir le Roy qui alloit passer par leur Bourg, respondit qu'il ne desmareroit pas d'une ajambée, et qu'il ne verroit rien qu'un homme comme luy.
>
> Je recevois donc les faveurs que sa Majesté me faisoit, avec un esprit qui toujours se tenoit en un mesme estat, et ne s'enfloit point orgueilleusement, par boutades.
>
> (Francion, p. 290)

Francion, in spite of his recognition of the King's nobility and power, refuses to be overawed by someone who is still just a human being. He seems particularly impressed by the acceptance of this idea by a peasant who probably has never had the opportunity to see the King in person, while Francion himself has personal experience on which to base his judgement.

Francion seems proud of his family in the following quotation when he speaks in detail of his father's virtuous actions and bravery as the basis for his family spirit:

---

[2] Ibid., p. 223.

> [Le] nom [de mon père] estoit la Porte, son pays estoit la Bretagne, sa race estoit des plus nobles et des plus anciennes et sa vertu et sa vaillance si notables qu'encore qu'il ne soit point parlé de luy dans les histoires de France, a cause de la negligence et de l'infidelité des autheurs de ce siecle, l'on ne laisse pas de sçavoir quel homme c'estoit et en combien de rencontres et de batailles il s'est trouvé pour le service de son Prince.
>
> (Francion, p. 156)

Since Francion conducts himself in a way he considers worthy of his birth and social status, he feels that a certain respect is due to him. When he compares himself to someone else, however, he justifies his high opinion of himself on more grounds than simply noble birth. For example, when he is discussing the qualifications of a particular conseiller at the Palais, he points out the various faults of the Conseiller as well as the individual's social background:

> Comment, vous dites donc qu'il est conseiller, luy respondis je, hé certainement il y a bien plus de sottise que de conseil dans sa teste. [. . .] Si est ce que l'on l'a tousjours estimé le plus grand asne de l'Université, ce dis-je, et quelque office qu'il ayt, je pense bien estre davantage que luy. N'ayez pas ceste vanité là, dit le solliciteur. Ce ne m'est point une vanité, respondis je: car je suis des plus nobles de la France, et luy n'est fils que d'un vil Marchand.
>
> (Francion, p. 217).

This distinction is not just based on the class difference, since Francion has already described the father of the man in question as "un des plus vilains usuriers et mercadents du monde",[3] and the conduct of the son as unworthy of

---

[3] Ibid., p. 215.

respect.

As it so often is, Francion's opinion is in direct opposition to that generally held by the rest of society. In this case, for example, the solliciteur with whom Francion is talking, found the young man referred to in the above quotation to be ennobled by his (purchased) position, in spite of both his origins and his unworthy actions.[4]

In contrast to the high ideals he is trying to encourage, Francion seems to see that they lack practical application.

> Il me sembloit que comme Hercule, je ne fusse né que pour chasser les monstres de la terre; toutefois, pour dire la verité, il n'y avoit pas moyen que j'operasse du tout en cela, car il faudroit destruire tous les hommes, qui n'ont plus rien maintenant d'humain que la figure.
> (Francion, p. 252)

From idealism, Francion seems to have despaired of the human race in its entirety. It seems that the human face has become the mask of the inhumanity of each individual. Francion has succeeded in seeing beneath it, even if his findings are inconsistent with his noble ideal.

As well, Francion evokes the image of Hercules, which could serve to put the heroic ideal in further doubt. Not only does this appear to be a feeble attempt at self-glorification or even self-deification (Hercules was a demi-god), but it does not blend well with the image of the

---

[4] Ibid., pp. 215-216.

heroes of chivalry. Hercules was a brave man of many fantastic deeds, but he could hardly be qualified as the ideal gentleman of absolute moral standards.[5]

The idealism inspired by the heroes of the novels of chivalry so important to Francion in his youth has a fluctuating effect on his life. While he always seems to project these high ideals publicly, by both his words and actions, the illusions of youth seem to weaken as the hard and unpleasant realities of this world are impressed on the young man. Even when weakened, however, the heroic idealism is never lost. At the end of the novel when the somewhat older Francion falls in love with Nays, his idealistic love of perfection seems to come through. Her beauty is so perfect that he falls in love with her picture, and after he meets her, he finds that her virtue and générosité are unquestioned. After a separation and all sorts of difficulties and adventures (not unlike those undergone by knights rescuing a maiden in distress) Francion arrives safe and sound to rejoin her and they are married.

However, the ideals of chivalry are not totally forgotten. This long-time veneration of youth, virility, physical strength and beauty, as well as noble virtues, has another effect on Francion's philosophy. He seems to have

---

5 His deeds were only feats of physical strength and his death was the result of the jealous revenge of his wife for his taking a concubine. (P. Grimal, ed., Mythologies classiques (Paris: Larousse, 1963), pp. 150-156).

developed an early aversion for the opposites of these desirable qualities, which affects his entire outlook on life. From the very beginning he detests and fears old age, impotence, weakness and ugliness, as well as the inevitable corollary of old age, death. Even when the ideals of chivalry no longer appear to be a vital influence on his life, these qualities will arouse fear and scorn in him. Thus, a childhood passion for the high adventure and noble ideals of chivalry may have influenced Francion's philosophy of life in what would seem to be a diametrically opposed direction -- to the philosophy of Carpe Diem. Perhaps this is in part because he never seems to have adopted the religious part of the inspiration behind chivalry. He was most affected, even as a child, by the dramatic life and death struggles and the love aspects of the lives of the knights errant.

Throughout the novel, we see the young Francion living according to idealistic precepts. In the course of his travels, he combats such vices as avarice, dishonesty and cruelty. He also is forever seeking the image or dream of the perfect woman. In the end, he seems to see the impossibility of finding moral or physical perfection and resigns himself to the reality of the world and to a marriage with a good woman who is beautiful and worthy of him, but who can never be perfect. Francion's images of chivalry and heroism are connected in his mind to youth and opposed to corruption, a lack of ideals, and old age. His

idealism becomes synonymous with life; old age and moral faults become masks of the ultimate destiny -- death. Where these qualities are contrasted, we may see the reflection of the direct opposition of life and death. In the Francion, these images and contrasts appear frequently and are an important concept for the interpretation of the novel.

Chapter 5

Life and Death in Francion's Philosophy

In the last chapter we discussed Francion's idealism and its relationship to the concepts of life and death which are central to our analysis of the novel. In this chapter, we will examine these concepts as well as old age (a mask of death) in the Francion. The central character himself does not seem upset by the knowledge he will eventually have to face his own death, but rather by the probability of enduring the discomforts and disabilities of old age.

Seeing the aged around them serve as a constant reminder of their mortality for the younger members of society in the Francion. They frequently adopt a lifestyle based on the idea expressed by the Roman poet, Horace, in his Odes: Carpe Diem.[1] To follow this philosophy obviously requires that one take advantage of every moment, living it to the full, without basing one's hopes on the future, since

---

[1] Horace, The Odes of Horace with Five Prefacing Epodes translated in their original meters by Margaret Ralston Gest. Miriam M. H. Thrall, ed. (Kutztown, Pennsylvania: Kutztown Publishing, 1973), Book 1, Ode 11, p. 59.

we never know when death will come or what our future will be like.[2]

These concepts are in contrast with the traditional idea of Christianity that life on this earth is a preliminary for an eternal reward or punishment. This idea implies that earthly life includes pain, suffering and sacrifice requiring those who accept it to forsake present pleasures for future heavenly rewards after death. Francion and many others in the novel are sure of their own existence but not of eternal life, and choose to enjoy pleasures here on earth.

Francion himself gives us his personal interpretation of this philosophy, especially as it affects his choice of a way of life. At Raymond's feast and orgy, he regales the guests with the following song of his own composition:

---

[2] Here is the whole of the text of the poem on which this attitude is based:

Ask not, Leuconoë -- for it is wrong -- what is the end for me;
what end's waiting for thee, given by gods. We shouldn't search out fate
through dark Babylon's charts. Better by far suffer whatever is,
should great Jupiter give winters to come or should the last be this
which now wearies the sea, moiling on cliffs high on the Tuscan coast.
May thou therefore be wise; filter the wine: and, as a life is short,
prune back faraway plans. While we now speak, flown has our greedy time.
So, friend, seize thou today, putting thy trust not in the morrow's morn.

(Horace, p. 59)

Apprenez, mes belles ames,
A mespriser tous les blâmes
De ces hommes hebetez
Ennemys des voluptez.

Ils ont mis au rang des vices
Les plus mignardes delices
Et fuyans leurs doux appas
En vivant ne vivent pas.

Abhorrez ceste folie,
Qui vient de melancholie.
Et ne cherchez seulement,
Que vostre contentement.

. . . . . .

Et l'ame a tant de plaisirs
Qu'elle n'a plus de desirs.

Hai mon Dieu que j'ay envie,
De pouvoir finir ma vie,
Au fort de ce doux combat,
Pour mourir avec esbat.
(Francion, pp. 319-320)

Francion expresses his philosophy succinctly in just two lines of the song: "Et ne cherchez seulement,/Que vostre contentement".

Francion sees the repression of oneself and the denial of pleasures as a denial of life, and he believes that to exist without truly living is folie. Since he wrote "Qu'on ne gouste rien au Cieux/Qui soit plus delicieux", he indicates that he is not prepared to wait for the rewards of a future life. It is in this sort of statement that Francion makes clear the heretical nature of his views. Although the party at which Francion enunciates his views develops into an orgy, his philosophy is not only applicable to pleasures of love, but to all aspects of human existence.

It is interesting to note that even in this song glorifying life, Francion refers to his own death in the last stanza. Perhaps he would even welcome death before the physical degeneration of old age, which is the worst aspect of death from his point of view.

Francion expresses his ideas clearly in this song, and the same evening uses various incidents to illustrate his position. For example, Agathe is attending the party because of her role as an intermediary with Laurette, but to Francion she symbolizes old age and death. However, this very role allows her to act as a catalytic love-agent. Another guest's remarks trigger the following discussion illustrating this point. The stranger begins:

> Monsieur, ne sçavez vous point la raison pourquoy Raymond a fait mettre icy ceste vieille, qui semble une piece antique du cabinet. Il veut que nous nous adonnions a toutes sortes de voluptez, et cependant il nous desgouste de celle de l'amour, plutost que de nous y attirer, car il nous met devant les yeux ce corps horrible, qui ne fait naistre en nous que l'effroy. [. . .] Sachez, Monsieur, luy respondit Francion, que Raymond a un trop bel esprit pour faire quelque chose autrement que bien a propos. Il nous invite par cet objet a nous addonner a tous les plaisirs du monde.
>
> N'avez vous pas ouy dire que les Egyptiens mettoient autrefois en leurs festins une carcasse de mort sur la table, afin que songeans que possible le lendemain ne seroient ils plus en vie, ils s'efforçassent d'employer le temps, le mieux qu'il leur seroit possible. Par cet object, Raymond nous veut prudemment advertir de la mesme chose, entre autres ces belles Dames, afin qu'elles se donnent carriere avant qu'elles soient reduittes en un age, où elles n'auront plus que des ennuis.
>
> (Francion, p. 314)

It is interesting to compare the reactions of these two men,

who obviously are both repulsed by the old woman's physical appearance, which represents a living death for both of them. It is really only in their interpretations of the meaning of the symbolism that they differ. They confirm this in the following quotation:

> Je ne sçay pas quelle carcasse de mort nous presente icy Raymond, repliqua ce Seigneur a Francion, mais comme vous voyez, elle mange et boit plus que quatre personnes vivantes, et s'il en est ainsi de toutes les autres, Pluton est fort empesché a les nourrir; si cela est, dit Francion, voyla la raison pourquoy il y en a tant qui se faschent de mourir, c'est qu'ils craignent d'aller en un lieu où regne la famine.
> (Francion, p. 314)

Francion's dinner companion goes so far as to refer to Agathe as a dead body and Francion has already affirmed that she is at least symbolic of death. It would appear therefore that both these young gentlemen see someone who has attained Agathe's age as already being past life and that they regard her existence as a living death.

We should also note, however, that it is not simply the young who accept Francion's philosophy of freedom and enjoying life. Even the aged Agathe, who describes the ravages of time on her former beauty, says she is pleased that she took advantage of her youth while she had it:

> Vous riez, Messieurs, de m'entendre parler de la sorte. Hé quoy ne sçauriez vous croire que j'aye esté belle? Ne se peut il pas faire, qu'en un lieu de la terre raboteux, plein d'ornieres, et couvert de bouë, il y ait eu autrefois un beau jardin, enrichy de diverses plantes et esmaillé de diverses fleurs? Ne peut il pas estre aussi, que ce visage ridé couvert d'une peau seiche et d'une couleur morte, ayt eu en ma jeunesse un teint

> delicat, et une peinture vive? Ignorez vous la puissance des ans qui ne pardonnent a rien? Ouy, ouy, je puis dire qu'alors mes yeux estoient l'Arsenac d'Amour, et que c'estoit là qu'il mettoit les foudres dont il embrase les coeurs. Si j'y eusse pensé alors, j'eusse faict faire mon portraict: il m'eust bien servi a ceste heure, pour vous prouver cette verité: mais lasl en recompense il me feroit plus jetter de larmes maintenant, que mes amans n'en jettoient pour moy: car je regretterois bien la perte des attraits que j'ay eus. Neantmoins ce qui me console, c'est que tant que j'en ay esté porveuë, je les ay assez bien employez, Dieu mercy. Il n'y a plus personne en France qui vous en puisse parler que moy: tous ceux de ce temps là sont allez marquer mon logis en l'autre monde.
>
> (Francion, p. 109)

Agathe enjoys her memories, and even when she tacitly acknowledges her own mortality by her reference to her deceased contemporaries, she does not regret her previous way of life. She has maintained an interest in life and refused to age mentally as her body aged. In this way, she seems to have attained a sort of cerebral 'non-mortality', in her attitude towards herself and society in general. She does not fear punishment in an afterlife, but seems confident of her "logis dans l'autre monde" with her friends. As well, she is the only truly pleasant older person portrayed in detail in the book, which characteristic may possibly be attributed to her attitude toward life, since she still enjoys vicarious pleasure even from those activities in which she is too old to take part.

Agathe's friends shared her outlook on life. Perrette, who first introduced her to prostitution, made some very interesting deathbed observations:

> Hé quoy, si j'estois punie apres ma mort pour avoir commis ce que l'on appelle larrecin, n'aurois je pas raison de dire a quiconque m'en parleroit que ce auroit esté une injustice de m'avoir mise au monde pour y vivre, sans me permettre de prendre les choses dont l'on y vit. (Francion, p. 125)

In order to survive and to enjoy some small luxuries in life, Perrette felt she was forced to resort to theft, prostitution and later, procuring. Her whole life appears to have been one of deception, since her primary concern was with illusion and trickery for material gain, either through theft or directly misleading gentlemen clients, or in providing the illusion of love that prostitution represents. She feels these are entirely natural ways of obtaining the money she needs. In fact, she feels society and God owe her a decent living, and that if it was not given to her, she was justified in taking it. Actually, she is apparently dying as a partial result of poverty,[3] however, she has no regrets concerning her way of life, even when she considers the possibility that she will have to justify her actions.

Agathe's lover Marsault, a professional thief, seems to have a similar attitude. He is in constant danger of facing capital punishment because of his illegal activities. Agathe asked him if he and other members of his band did not fear death:

> Je luy demanday si pas un des siens ne craignoit le supplice: il me respondit qu'il croyoit qu'il

---

[3] Francion, p. 125.

> n'y en avoit gueres qui y songeassent seulement, et qu'ils n'avoient rien devant les yeux que leur necessité qui les obligeoit a chercher les moyens de passer leur vie parmy le contentement, et que s'il avenoit que l'on les fit mourir, l'on les delivreroit du soucy et de la peine qu'ils prenoient a tascher de se tirer hors de la pauvreté.
>
> (Francion, p. 115)

For Marsault, death is less to be feared than existing without happiness. In order to have the things or money which will provide his happiness, Marsault is willing to risk the very real possibility of facing the death penalty for his actions. In other words, it is the quality rather than the quantity of life which is important to him.[4]

However, Francion does realize the inevitability of old age and death, even for those who accept his philosophy:

> Ce que l'on prend ordinairement pour la plus grande sagesse du monde n'est rien que sottise, erreur et manque de jugement, je le feray veoir lors qu'il en sera besoing. Mesme nous autres, qui croyons avoir bien employé le temps que nous passons a l'amour, aux festins, aux mommeries, nous nous trouverrons a la fin trompez: nous verrons que nous sommes des fous. Les maladies nous affligeront et la debilité des membres nous viendra, avant que nous soyons en l'age caduc.
>
> (Francion, p. 312)

Francion does not forget the realities of physical existence. He realizes that living by his code, all he can do is put his time to what seems to be the best possible use; he cannot increase his lifespan, or even the period of his youth. The one ray of hope here is provided by the

---

[4] cf. Epicurus, "Letter to Menoeceus", in The Philosophy of Epicurus, pp. 179-180.

example of Agathe who seems to illustrate that a youthful mental attitude can be maintained even in an aged body. Francion advocates experiencing as much as possible in one's lifetime.[5] He travels, meets many types of people and is not afraid of new experiences. Since society's traditional moral standards, religious beliefs and laws restrict one's behavior, these must be rejected. According to Francion, life is to be lived to its fullest without any external restrictions on the individual.

However, the freedom of the individual in a less-free society will have effects even on those who do not accept this philosophy. Francion recognizes this and advocates freedom not just for himself or a limited group, but for everyone. He goes so far as to suggest the elimination of marriage, personal wealth and the hereditary class system:

> Il vaudroit bien mieux que nous fussions tous libres: l'on se joindroit sans se joindre avecque celle qui plairoit le plus, et lors que l'on en seroit las, il seroit permis de la quitter. Si s'estant donnée a vous, elle ne laissoit pas de prostituer son corps a quelqu'autre, quand cela viendroit a vostre cognoissance, vous ne vous en offenceriez point, car les chimeres de l'honneur ne seroient point dans vostre cervelle. [. . .] Vous me representerez que l'on ne sçauroit pas a quels hommes appartiendroient les enfans qu'engendreroient les femmes: mais qu'importe cela? [. . .] Cecy seroit cause d'un tres grand bien, car l'on seroit contraint d'abolir tout preeminence, et toute noblesse, chacun seroit esgal, et les fruits de la terre seroient communs.
> (Francion, p. 316)

---

[5] Francion, p. 465.

Couched in these ideas are some of Francion's criticisms of the French society of the seventeenth century. He derides the ideas of false "honour" and social class, which are central to so many of the values of that society. By proposing his reforms, Francion (or Sorel) expresses his views on the injustice of the existing system. By eliminating les chimeres de l'honneur, he hopes to allow for the more natural and finer qualities of truly noble or généreux men to shine through, in a society where one's birth would not determine one's "nobility" or lack of it.

However, Francion is a very realistic person, and knows by experience that he cannot convince many people of the validity of his theories. When he discusses his ideas at the court, he receives a very mixed reaction:

> Je semois parmy eux le plus qu'il m'estoit possible, les enseignements de ma nouvelle philosophie, dont je vous ay desja parlé. Quelques esprits y prenoient du goust, et ne s'en falloit guere qu'ils ne desirassent de la pouvoir suivre, mais d'autres barbares et stupides, luy faisoient un si mauvais accueil, que j'eusse voulu ne leur en avoir jamais parlé. Mesme, comme c'est l'ordinaire de la bestise des hommes, ils vindrent a m'accuser de folie, ce qui me fascha tant que je me resolus de tenir comme un thresor caché ce que je sçavois, puisqu'il n'y avoit personne qui eust la volonté de s'en servir.
>
> (Francion, p. 269)

Unfortunately Francion chose to unveil his new ideas to those who had the most to lose by them, the ones who had positions of honour and prestige under the existing social system. While they might gain some freedoms, they would lose by having to deserve the respect of others rather than

acquiring it as a natural consequence of their wealth or social position. Members of the lower classes, such as Agathe, have little to lose in such an overthrow of the existing value system, and Francion himself esteemed freedom over any other privilege he might have, and therefore would not be sacrificing much to adopt the new system.

Faced with society's disapproval, Francion takes a simple and logical stance:

> Il ne m'importe, ce dis je en moy mesme; les hommes refusent leur bien que je leur presente, ils en porteront la peine; il est vray que j'en patiray quelque peu, mais quoy il faut s'accommoder au temps; la mort viendra bientost me delivrer de ces angoisses.
> (Francion, p. 269)

This attitude involves some slight sacrifice of his own beliefs, but at least it makes Francion's life within the existing constraints of society tolerable. As well, because of the inevitability of death, it is not worth wasting his time combatting rejection, since this would be thwarting his own principles in trying to defend them.

Accepting Francion's philosophy seems to make the day-to-day lives of the younger characters much more pleasant, and even the memories of their younger days seem to support those who accepted these principles and have grown old. These attitudes towards life and its meaning thus profoundly affect the role that both life and death play in the thinking and actions of each character in the novel.

For Francion and Sorel, life is only worth living if you truly live, and only the young are capable of taking

full advantage of all the opportunities for life. The exaltation of pleasure and youth is a natural development of this idea. Death is a natural occurence, but the effect of old age or infirmity is to impose a living death on its victim who must endure an existence between these two otherwise distinct states of being.

Chapter 6

Death without Masks

Death is an imminent reality which can strike at any time with very little warning. In Sorel's Francion, however, it seems to have become a compulsive preoccupation.

The very fact that death is discussed openly and frequently in the book is an indication of Sorel's acceptance of death as a natural phenomenon. It also suggests Sorel's fascination with the subject. There are many instances where death is discussed by an objective third party, an observer who accepts death in a very matter-of-fact way, often as a result of conditions in a 'man-made' society, rather than a purely natural consequence of old age or illness.

One of the first references to death in the Francion reflects absolute indifference to the life (or death) of another. A thief, finding Francion unconscious after a fall, robs him of an emerald ring:

> Ceste bonne rencontre luy bailla de la consolation pour tous les ennuys qu'il pouvoit avoir, et sans se soucier si celui qu'il desroboit estoit mort ou

> vivant, ny qui l'avoit mis en ce lieu là, il s'en alla où le destin le vouloit conduire.
> (Francion, p. 74)

This reflects the attitude, shown throughout the book, that we must all seek our own well-being in this life, rather than caring for others. The course of one's life, and its end, are often beyond one's control, and one must make the best of what opportunities are available. There is no humanitarian concern shown here at all. This may be considered as an example of the unreasoned attitude displayed by a person of low social and moral status in the society, and it may not be typical. (In contrast, Francion risks his life to spare that of another in his duel with Bajamond, and takes time from his affairs to help others (the son and daughter of DuBuisson); even Agathe rescues the baby Laurette, brings her up and teaches her the ways of the world.)

Either Francion or Agathe appear to be the sort of person who would aid another facing death. The only example we have of this however, is Agathe's recounting of her staying with Perrette when the latter was on her deathbed. She describes the illness and subsequent death of her friend and mentor, in the following way:

> [C]ette chetive vie fut, je pense, la principalle cause d'une grande indisposition qui prit a Perrette. Comme elle estoit merveilleusement triste de se voir ainsi deschuë, la bonne Dame se sentoit bien deffaillir peu a peu: c'est pourquoy elle fit ce que l'on a coustume de faire en ceste extremité [. . .]
> (Francion, p. 125)

One's grip on life is therefore seen as being very weak and easily destroyed by such relatively common circumstances as a change in one's economic condition. In this case poverty and its disappointments led to illness which ended in death. It is interesting to read Perrette's deathbed advice, which is the justification for her conduct in this life, and is to serve as her defence if she is judged in the next world. She speaks of the invalidity of the private possession of property or goods and says that:

> [C]'est tres sagement faict de les ravir subitement quand l'on peut des mains d'autruy; car disoit elle: Je suis venuë toute nuë en ce monde: et nuë je m'en retourneray: Les biens que j'ay pris d'autruy je ne les emporteray point, que l'on les aille chercher où ils sont, et que l'on les prenne, je n'en ay plus que faire? Hé quoy, si j'estois punie apres ma mort pour avoir commis ce que l'on appelle larrecin, n'aurois je pas raison de dire a quiconque m'en parleroit que ce auroit esté une injustice de m'avoir mise au monde pour y vivre, sans me permettre de prendre les choses dont l'on y vit.
>
> (Francion, p. 125)

Really then, life is not worth living without the material possessions that make it more pleasant, and Perrette feels she has a right to them as long as she is alive. Death is therefore not a terrifying or even necessarily unpleasant alternative to life for those whose earthly lot is miserable or who have faced many disappointments. Her death was apparently of natural causes, but Perrette did not fear it, nor did she express a willingness to cling to life at all costs.

As well, material goods are for the living, and the

dead have no further need for the trappings so important to those in this world. Therefore, Agathe avoided wasting what money she had on the dead, when arranging the funeral of her friend.

> [J]e la fis enterrer sans aucune pompe comme elle m'avoit recommandé, parce qu'elle sçavoit qu'il n'est rien de plus inutile.
> (Francion, pp. 125-126)

This simplicity is not only pragmatic, but also a reflection of the religious and secular worlds' attitude toward Perrette and her 'dishonourable' profession, which would probably have rendered ridiculous or impossible any attempt at a lavish funeral. Perrette and Agathe both have an immensely practical view of life and death, so Agathe felt no need to have an elaborate funeral to commemorate her friend's passing.

The concept of the futility of customary burial rites, however, also goes against the tenets of even Greek and Roman mythology, which held that they were necessary to quickly cross the river Cocytus in the Underworld.[1] While

---

[1] [Aeneas and the Sibyl] then came to the black river Cocytus, where they found the ferryman, Charon, old and squalid, but strong and vigorous, who was receiving passengers of all kinds into his boat [. . .] the stern ferryman took in only such as he chose, driving the rest back [. . .] [The Sibyl said] Those who are taken on board the bark are the souls of those who have received due burial rites; the host of others who have remained unburied are not permitted to pass the flood but wander a hundred years, and flit to and fro about the shore, till at last they are taken over.

(Thomas Bulfinch. Bulfinch's Mythology (New York: Random, n.d.), p. 214.)

this situation does not seem to constitute a direct reference to legend, it is an interesting comparison, since Agathe is referred to as a Sibyl[2] and as having the qualities of those mythological ladies -- yet she rejects the traditional burial customs important to both her own and the ancient cultures.

Death, however, does not always come from natural causes. The motivation to seek material goods to make life more pleasant can also result in death as punishment if crime is involved. Agathe's lover, Marsault, a member of a street gang in Paris, meets such an end at the hands of justice, although he evaded the law for some time before his demise:

> Marsault eschappa belle ce coup là: mais il n'en fut pas ainsi quinze jours apres que des Archers l'encoffrerent pour avoir volé la maison d'un bourgeois d'authorité: Son proces fut expedié en deux jours, et on l'envoya en Greve où son col sceut combien pesoit le reste de son corps.
>
> (Francion, p. 124)

The metaphor used to describe the hanging is burlesque, showing the indifference of society as a whole to the lives of certain of its members.

In another example of a reference to capital punishment, the thief Oliver, whom Laurette mistook for her lover Francion, realizes the danger of his own position when she recognizes that he is not the man she was expecting. He

---

[2] Francion, p. 314.

says:

> Je sçay bien que ma vie et ma mort sont entre vos mains.
>
> (Francion, p. 76)

In spite of this, when he realizes that his life is safe, he can joke only minutes later about the probable fate of his companions, whom he himself has helped to capture.

> Ma foy, tu fais bien de ne vouloir plus te tenir davantage en l'air, car c'est un element qui t'est tout a fait contraire, et tu ne mourras jamais autre part: c'est ta predestination. [. . .] Laissons les là, dit Laurette, qu'ils se plaignent tout leur saoul, personne ne viendra a leur secours que les sergents et le bourreau.
>
> (Francion, p. 80)

In this attitude, Oliver resembles the other thief, his confederate, who robbed the unconscious Francion. Neither of them is prepared to protect any life except his own. Oliver, who was supposedly the friend of these two men, is not concerned for their welfare and virtually seals their fate himself (although they do later escape death). Laurette, who should have been concerned about the security of the Chateau and her honour, is not at all concerned about the embarrassing and dangerous situation the thieves are now in, even though she knows they will likely face death in a few hours.

In addition to the attitudes of these minor characters, there are many examples of Francion's own opinions on death. To take the life of an innocent person is a great injustice in his eyes. The case of Clerante, who was to be assassinated, provides a good example of this. The

intended victim, attending a wedding in disguise, overhears the details of the plot. Francion's reaction on being told about this was as follows:

> Clerante me conta ce qu'il avoit entendu dire aux deux vieillards, dont je conjecturay que c'estoit son bon genie, qui l'avoit porté a se desguiser pour descouvrir une si grande trahison.
> (Francion, p. 282)

Some sort of bon genie has protected Clerante from this injustice, since the only quarrel the plotters had with him was in matters concerning his social and moral behavior which they did not believe becoming for a nobleman. Francion's strong disapproval of this action is illustrated by the words une si grande trahison.

Even family ties are no guarantee of great sympathy or grief in the case of a death. Francion describes his own father's death in very matter-of-fact terms.

> [C]omme j'estois quasi sur le point de partir, mon Pere devint malade a l'extremité. En vain les Medecins d'alentour firent leurs efforts de le guerir, il falut qu'il mourust, et qu'il laissast sa femme et ses enfans extremement affligez de faire une telle perte.
> (Francion, p. 213)

This account is being made by Francion himself some time after his father's death, but there is no emotion involved in it for him, perhaps because he does not regard death as an intrinsically bad phenomenon. The phrase 'il falut qu'il mourust' implies resignation to the inevitability of death. Somehow, it seems almost artificially cold and calculating, although he describes the family (which includes himself) as 'extremement affligez'.

In the course of the novel, despite his many adventures, some of which put his own life in danger, Francion never kills another human being. He is however put in a situation where he must duel for his honour with Count Bajamond. Rather than slay his opponent in this combat, he accepts Bajamond's avowal that he had the power to kill him honourably and that he, Francion, spared his life only by choice. There is still a certain lust for combat and almost a joy in the physical danger involved. Francion, recounting the incident to Clerante, descibes it as follows:

> Je presse mon ennemy le plus qu'il m'est possible, et luy tire tant de coups d'espées, qu'il a fort a faire a les parer tous: comme je luy en voulois donner un, son Cheval se cabrant le receut dessus les yeux, qui furent incontinent offusquez de sang: ce qui le mit en telle fougue, qu'il perdit le soin d'obeir davantage a l'esperon et a la bride. Son Maistre a beau se servir de son industrie: il le meine nonobstant en un lieu plein de fange, où je le poursuivis de si pres, que si j'eusse voulu je l'eusse tué; mais je ne desirois pas le frapper par derriere. Je luy crie qu'il se retourne. Enfin il a tant de puissance sur son cheval qu'il le fait et en mesme temps me perce le bras gauche. Incontinent apres qu'il m'eust frappé, son cheval le secoüa si vivement a l'impourveu qu'il le jetta dans une fosse pleine de bouë, où pour me vanger de ma playe, je luy en eusse fait cent autres mortelles, si j'en eusse eu le desir. Je me contentay de luy mettre la pointe de mon espée sous la gorge, et de luy demander s'il ne confessoit pas qu'il ne tenoit qu'a moy que je luy ostasse la vie. Luy qui ne se pouvoit tirer du lieu où il estoit, fut contrainct de m'accorder tout, et puis son amy luy vint ayder a se relever. Si vous eussiez eu un tel avantage sur moy, que celuy que j'ay eu sur vous, je ne sçay, luy dis je, si vous ne vous en fussiez point servy. [. . .] Non, non, me dit le gentilhomme qui nous accompagnoit, vous avez assez donné de preuves de vostre valeur, il ne faut point que

> cecy se termine par le trespas. Il suffit que vous ayez monstré comme j'en suis tesmoing, que vous avez eu la puissance de tuer Bajamond.
> (Francion, pp. 300-301)

In contrast to Francion's respect for life, some noblemen, such as Bajamond, were not above having their enemies attacked by common rabble to 'avenge' themselves.[3]

In spite of Francion's attitude that the duel is the only honourable way for gentlemen to settle disagreements or points of honour between them, many authors of the time disapproved of or were ambivalent in their attitudes towards duels because of the legal situation concerning duels in seventeenth century France.[4] In the Francion, the description of the duel seems to take a contrary view in the idealization of this method of settling differences, as shown both by the point of view and the actions of Francion. Francion does not react with blood lust and avoids the chance to kill Bajamond, even when he could honourably do so. Even more notable is the fact that although Francion feared for his own life when attacked by the gang Bajamond wanted to use to kill him, he never seemed to consider mortal danger to himself in the context of the duel.

Several other times Francion has to face the very

---

[3] Ibid., pp. 296-297.

[4] For a brief history of dueling in France and royal edicts forbidding it, see Richard Herr, "Honor Versus Absolutism: Richelieu's Fight Against Dueling", Journal of Modern History, 23 (1955), pp. 281-285.

real possibility of his own imminent death, with no element of honour to make it seem worthwhile. Once, he finds himself virtually a prisoner in the home of his friend Raymond. In fact, Raymond is planning a feast and orgy in honour of his guest, but Francion is locked in his room totally unaware of the preparations, and is actually misled as to their nature and purpose. As part of this 'joke', the Maistre d'Hostel tells Francion to prepare himself for death, because Raymond has taken a sudden violent dislike to him. Francion can only conceive of this sort of calculated death as vengeance for a wrong, yet sees no cause for it in this case.

> [Le Maistre d'Hostel] ne manqua donc pas a le venir retrouver selon qu'il avoit promis, et luy asseura que son Maistre avoit conceu une plus forte hayne contre luy, depuis le jour precedent, pour quelque advertissement qu'il avoit eu soudain, de sorte qu'il s'imaginoit qu'il avoit resolu de le faire mourir. Francion se mit longtemps a songer, quelle offence il avoit pû faire a Raymond, et n'en trouvant point, il fut le plus estonné du monde.
>
> (Francion, p. 305)

After his futile reasoning, Francion is still prepared to bravely face his own death. However, to die without defending himself seems unreasonable and by fighting for his life he would also be able to display his insigne valeur.

> Il s'y accorda, se deliberant d'empoigner la premiere chose de defense qu'il trouveroit, pour resister a ceux qui viendroient pour luy faire quelque mal: car il n'avoit pas envie de se laisser mettre a mort, sans donner auparavant beaucoup de tesmoignages d'une insigne valeur.
>
> En ceste resolution il sortit de sa chambre, avec un visage aussi peu esmeu, que s'il eust esté a un banquet. Je ne pense pas que Socrate estant

> en une pareille affaire eust l'ame de beaucoup plus constante.
>
> (Francion, p. 307)

Francion's bravery cannot be solely a fabrication of his chivalrous notions, when he is capable of this sort of calm in the face of what he believes to be an ignoble execution. All Francion's conjectures up to the minute when he is led from the room show a quick imagination and a sort of fascination with the concept of death. He is not afraid to die, though he resents what seems a pointless death. He is calm enough to analyse what will later prove to be a parody of execution, before he realizes that it is all an illusion.

> Le Maistre d'Hostel luy ayant dit encore quelque temps après, qu'assurément Raymond avoit envie de l'oster du monde, il [Francion] dit qu'il croioit donc qu'avec les habits de theatre qu'il luy envoyoit, il luy vouloit faire joüer une tragedie, où il representeroit le personnage de quelqu'un que l'on avoit mis a mort, le temps passé, et que l'on le tueroit tout a bon. [. . .] Je ne sçaurois quitter mon humeur ordinaire, quelque malheur qui m'avienne, dit Francion, et puis je vous asseure que je ne redoute point un passage auquel je me suis dès long temps resolu, puisque tost ou tard il le faut franchir. Je ne me fasche que de ce que l'on me veut faire mourir en coquin. [. . .] Je pense, dit il, que l'on veut observer la coustume des anciens Romains, qui entouroient de belles guirlandes, et d'autres ornemens, les victimes qu'ils alloient sacrifier.
>
> (Francion, pp. 306-307)

Therefore, Francion can accept the inevitability of his own death, even in the face of what appears to him to be murder.

Francion imagines that this plot could all be a part of some macabre game or play. but he doesn't realize at this stage that even his death could be play-acting and not real. In other words, he can recognize that it might be a game, a

mask of death for the others, but cannot see that they have merely blinded him to the reality of Raymond's intentions. This time, the image of death manages to temporarily obscure the possible pleasures of life for Francion. It is also important to note that Raymond trusted Francion's constance d'ame enough to permit this joke about the concept of his death.[5]

Francion faces an even more real threat of death with equal or greater calm. While accompanying the beautiful Nays and her party to Italy, Francion is lured away from the group by two other jealous suitors. Supposedly on a visit to see a friend of one of them, Francion is tricked into sitting in a rigged chair which imprisons him in a dungeon. Actually in this case the 'jailer' was given orders to kill Francion. Quand ils furent en pleine Italie, Valere et Ergaste penserent qu'ils trouveroient bien moyen de l'attraper, comme de faict il leur fut assez facile. [. . .]

> En peu d'heures ils arriverent au Chasteau où ils furent tres bien receus par celuy qui en estoit le Capitaine. [. . .] Aussi tost le Capitaine qui avoit le mot du guet, prend un gros trousseau de clefs, et apres beaucoup de chemin les fait entrer dans une forte tour, où il dit que sont enfermées les plus grandes raretez du lieu. Il leur monstre une grande chaire toute ronde, fort antique qui a un marchepied; il leur asseure qu'a toutes heures lors que l'on est assis dedans, l'on entend un certain bruit harmonieux qui vient, ce semble, de dessous le plancher, mais que l'on n'en peut trouver la cause, si l'on ne l'impute a quelques Demons qui habitent en ce lieu là. [. . .] Francion qui demeuroit tout le dernier, et se rioit de ces contes là, s'assit au mesme lieu

---

[5] Francion, p. 308.

> par complaisance. Mais le Capitaine a l'instant se tenant tout proche, tourna une cheville dont il lasche un ressort qui fit couler la chaire et celuy qui estoit dessus jusques en une large fosse, où il fut longtemps si estonné qu'il ne bougeoit de sa place. Ergaste et Valere le voyans si bien pris remercierent le Capitaine de la bonne assistance qu'il leur avoit donnée, et le prierent de la continuer en faisant mourir celuy qui estoit en ses prisons, quand il luy sembleroit a propos.
> (Francion, pp. 361-364)

The victim certainly had no reason to hope for mercy from his two rivals. In spite of this, Francion chose to philosophize in his dungeon:

> Il avoit en luy mesme plusieurs considerations, dont il se servoit pour adoucir son ennuy. Il se representoit qu'il valoit bien autant estre enfermé comme il estoit, que d'estre en franchise parmy le monde, où c'est une folie que d'esperer quelque vray repos. Pour le moins il estoit là delivré de la veuë des desbordements du siecle, et avoit tout loisir de nourrir son esprit de diverses pensées, et de philosopher profondement.
>
> Le Capitaine n'ayant pas assez de cruauté pour le laisser mourir là en langueur, ny pour luy faire donner quelque poison qui eust un soudain effect, se delibera de luy rendre la liberté, veu qu'Ergaste estoit bien loin, et ne songeoit possible plus guere a luy.
> (Francion, pp. 365-366)

It is interesting to speculate that Francion's very philosophical attitude could have been an unconscious way of preparing for his own death. As Montaigne tells us:

> Cicero dit que Philosopher ce n'est autre chose que s'aprester à la mort. C'est d'autant que l'estude et la contemplation retirent aucunement nostre ame hors de nous, et l'embesognent à part du corps, qui est quelque apprentissage et ressemblance de la mort; ou bien, c'est que toute la sagesse et discours du monde se resoult en fin à ce point, de nous apprendre à ne craindre point

à mourir.[6]

Thus, death is a real or potentially real factor of which Francion, and the other characters of the novel, as well as Sorel, were all constantly aware. The author repeatedly emphasizes the importance of death in the lives of his characters: some fear it, others choose to live without worrying about it too much, but they all think about it at one time or another.

Francion is full of references to and accounts of death. We see the reality of death in everyday life, real and imagined threats of death, a duel, attempted murders, and the spectre of death as punishment for crimes. Death seems to be a hoped-for release for the poor, an accepted reality for the aged, and a joke for the young. Death is something risked to save earthly honour, yet generally something to be avoided. In the mystique of death are intertwined the concepts of reward or punishment in the afterlife and the superstitions of ghosts, spirits and demons which affect the actions of some of the characters. Old age will become, especially for Francion, a fearful symbol -- the fore-runner of inevitable death. Francion's awareness of death influences his actions. For him the fascination of death is so strong that he cannot even escape it in his dream, when he sees himself drowning and going to

---

[6] Montaigne, Essais, I, book 1, chapter 20, p. 81.

heaven.

Chapter 7

The Living Death

As we have seen in the preceding chapter, death is discussed openly in the Francion, but it also constantly appears by implication, or in illusions, hidden behind masks. These masks are generally references to or manifestations of old age. Francion must live with the reality of aging every day, and read his own future in the faces of the older people around him.

The aged are scorned or even despised for their age alone, since they are seen as no longer capable of actively participating in life. Not only are they old, they are also considered weak, stupid, ugly, and corrupt. Generally they are portrayed as being sexually mal-adjusted fools. Francion sees old age as a sort of living death, since all those things which make life worthwhile for him are denied to older people. He dreads aging even more than death itself, which is a momentary experience, rather than a continuous torment. He has generally faced the death of those around him with equanimity, but one day he will likely be forced to face and endure his own lingering and humiliating old age

and subsequent death, which contrast so sharply with the heroic death of chivalry.

The aging process begins very early in life: the company of young men who called themselves the braves et genereux,[1] begins to disintegrate as the members accept responsibilities in adult society. It had been exceedingly popular, but:

> Neantmoins avecque le temps, nostre compagnie perdit un peu de sa vogue; la pluspart estoient forcez de s'en retirer, songeant a se pourvoir de quelque office pour gaigner leur vie, et a espouser quelque femme: estants sur ce poinct là, ils ne pouvoient plus se mesler avec nous.
> (Francion, p. 244)

The loss of the almost absolute freedom that Francion enjoys is thus a consequence of growing up or growing older. We can see by this example that Francion resisted the maturing process and strove to retain all the carefree aspects of youth. He never quite seems to decide to mature into the role society expected of its adult members. This appears to be one of the reasons that he demanded his freedom throughout the book, and that, even when he is prepared to marry Nays, he is not quite ready to comport himself as befits an engaged and responsible man, and he becomes involved with Emilie.[2] Apparently, even at the moment when he seems quite satisfied with the way his life is

---

[1] of which Francion was the founder, This expression meant 'the well-dressed, courageous and daring people'.

[2] Francion, pp. 465-485.

developing, he is not quite ready to accept the bonds and responsibilities which he may subconsciously associate with maturity, and thus with the beginning of the aging process.

As well, Francion was once friendly with a group of young poets who were as impoverished as he was at the time. At first these young idealists seemed carefree and perfect companions for Francion, but with the passage of time, he grew to like them less and less. One of his main criticisms of them was that:

> Toutes leurs opinions estoient puisées de la boutique de quelque vieil resveux qu'ils suivoient en tout et par tout, et mesme se plaisoient en discourant a user de quelques façons de parler extremement sottes, qui luy estoient communes.
> (Francion, p. 231)

He seems to believe that the opinions of older people are of very little worth, and that only very foolish young people would agree with them. Since this attitude forms part of the eternal rebellion of the young against the older generation, it is naturally a part of Francion's disdain for the aged.

This general scorn is shown even more clearly in Francion's attitude to a habit of Raymond's. The latter enjoys listening to the conversation (and presumably the opinions) of older people in the neighbourhood, but Francion does not, and explains his feelings as follows:

> Pour moy de mon naturel, je ne me plais guere a toutes ces choses là, car je n'ayme pas la communication des personnes sottes et ignorantes. Neantmoins afin de luy agreer, je m'efforçois tant d'y prendre du plaisir, que je puis asseurer que j'en prenois quelque espece, quand ce n'eust esté

> que de voir qu'il en recevoit, d'autant que mon principal soin estoit de le faire vivre joyeusement.
>
> (Francion, p. 270)

Francion classified these older people as sottes and ignorantes, apparently for no other reason than that they are old. It is interesting to note that the subject of conversation is their younger days, which they apparently enjoy discussing, although we must remember that the topic was chosen by Raymond. This concentration on the past and the youth of the speakers, and Raymond's own interest in this subject, indicates a sort of refusal to accept the reality of the present and of the future. One reason that Francion finds older people to be unpleasant company is that his own interests concentrate on the present or the immediate future, rather than on the past.

As well, it seems that Francion's dislike for the aged is founded more on simple prejudice than on factual experience. In the quoted passage, he both deems impossible any pleasure for himself in talking with such people, and admits that he did in fact enjoy listening to these discussions. He tries to excuse this paradox by expressing concern for his friend's entertainment, but this is really a poor explanation.

Francion is not the only character in the book who ridicules older people. In the following quote, we see Hortensius' friend, a vieil pedant, fall victim to the younger man's heartlessness and to the joke of some of

Hortensius' students on their master:

> Hortensius ne songea pas a son pasté jusqu'au lendemain qu'il en eut un ressouvenir, et commanda a son Cuistre d'aller prier de des-jeuner un autre vieil Pedant, sien compagnon de bouteille, et de luy dire qu'il luy feroit manger d'un bon lievre, a la charge qu'il apportast une quarte de son bon vin pour servir de remede a la soif que leur causeroit l'Epice. Ce Pedant ne faillit pas a venir a l'heure avec autant de vin qu'Hortensius avoit dit, et si tost qu'il fut dans la chambre, le Cuistre alla querir le pasté dans la caisse, et le posa sur sa table où il ne fut pas si tost que le vieil Pedant prit un cousteau qu'il fourra par l'endroit mesme où la crouste estoit entamée pensant qu'elle ne le fust point et tournoya tout a l'entour tenant une main ferme sur la couverture: et disant, ça, ça, il faut voir ce que ce pasté cy a dedans le ventre. Ah Monsieur Hortensius que vous avez icy un bon cousteau? Il coupe tout seul, je ne m'efforce point presque. Hortensius se mouroit de rire voyant qu'il estoit si sot qu'il passoit le cousteau par le lieu où il estoit desja coupé: et l'autre disoit en ostant la couverture, qu'avez vous a rire? Alors ses yeux ne pouvant pas discerner ce qui estoit dedans la crouste, il mit ses lunettes, et voyant le chaussepié au lieu d'un lievre, il creut qu'Hortensius s'estoit voulu moquer de luy [. . .] il reprit sa quarte sous sa robbe de chambre, et s'en retourna tout en grommelant.
>
> (Francion, pp. 176-177)

The first interesting point about this quotation is that to call someone a vieil pedant is to describe him as being old twice, strongly emphasizing the fact. As well, the man has difficulty seeing (physical degeneration) and is slow-witted (mental degeneration), both typical signs of old age in the Francion. Hortensius had already eaten some of the pâté (which explains the crust already being cut) and some of his students have stolen what was left of the meat (leaving the chaussepié in its place). This joke was intended to go against Hortensius, but it turned against the older man

instead, implying that misfortune is more likely to befall the aged, perhaps because of their slower wits. Moreover, his 'friend' Hortensius can do nothing but laugh at the older man's slow wits, and does not even attempt to stop him when he stomps out in disgust.

Hortensius shows his disdain for the aged even more strongly when he is searching for someone to support his false claim to noble birth. He finds an old man from his village and is quite prepared to endanger this pious man's eternal salvation to aid himself in his courtship of Fremonde:

> Reduit a ceste extremité, il chercha diligemment les moyens de soustenir une chose si mensongere, et ayant appris qu'un bon vieillard de son village estoit a Paris, il l'alla trouver, et le pria de venir tesmoigner qu'il avoit connu son pere, et qu'il l'avoit tousjours veu tenir dans le pays pour gentilhomme. Le vieillard qui estoit fort homme de bien, dist qu'estant si pres, comme il estoit, d'aller rendre compte a Dieu de ses actions, il ne pouvoit se resoudre a proferer un mensonge pour toute la recompense qu'il luy promettoit, de laquelle il se trouvoit guere desireux, n'ayant plus quasi affaire des biens de ce monde. Hortensius luy repliqua là dessus, que sur toutes les demandes que l'on luy pourroit faire, il luy dresseroit des responces si subtiles, qu'encores qu'elles n'eussent rien que de la verité, elles ne lairroient pas de beaucoup servir a prouver ce qu'il falloit. [. . .] et par ainsi vous ne commettez pas le quart d'un avorton de peché venial en parlant [. . .]
>
> (Francion, pp. 203-204)

Hortensius appears to have a real hatred for older people when he is prepared to induce this man to do something against both his faith and his will for so trivial a purpose. It is also important to note that the old man was

credulous and weak-willed enough to accept the proposal.

However, Hortensius suffers the deprivations of early aging brought on by illness. Because of this illness, he experiences many of the indignities suffered by the aged:

> Là dessus, du Buisson et Audebert qui estoient avec Hortensius, monterent sans se faire prier, mais pour luy il ne voulut jamais passer devant Francion, tant il estoit courtois: Monsieur, ce disoit il, allez devant. Il vous faudroit une plus grande vertu que la patience pour aller apres moy: j'ay esté malade pendant mon voyage; je n'ay plus de jambes que par bienseance, mon corps se porte assez mal pour estre celuy d'un Pape, et a trente six ans je ne suis pas moins ruiné que le Chasteau de Bissestre: je suis plus vieil que ma grand mere, et aussi usé qu'un vaisseau qui auroit fait trois fois le voyage des Indes. Mais, Monsieur, lui dit Francion, en se riant, si vous disiez que vous estes aussi usé que la marmite des Cordeliers qui leur sert depuis six vingts ans, la similitude ne seroit elle pas meilleure? Ma foy ne vous mocquez pas, reprit Hortensius, ny dans les deserts de l'Afrique, ny a la foire S. Germain on ne voit point de monstre si cruel qu'a esté ma maladie. Pour vous, vous estes d'une si forte matiere que rien n'est capable de l'alterer, si la cheute d'une montagne ne vous renversoit. Vous estes capable de peupler des colonies.
>
> (Francion, p. 424)

Besides all the physical disabilities and pain generally associated with illnesses of old age, Hortensius also suffers from impotence. This is one of the most important differences shown between old men and young in the novel, particularly since sexuality plays such a large part in the life and activities of Francion. Hortensius himself emphasizes this point by comparing Francion's strength in all aspects with his weakness. He virtually ascribes the quality of eternal youth to Francion, since his constitution appears to be indestructible.

In contrast to this description of Francion, the very first paragraph of the entire work shows us an old man, Valentin, who is mocked not only for his physical appearance, but also for his impotence. The whole scene that is described is based on his foolish efforts to conquer his sexual difficulties.

> Les voiles de la nuict avoient couvert tout l'Orison, lorsqu'un certain vieillard qui s'appelloit Valentin, sortit d'un Chasteau de Bourgongne avec une robbe de chambre, un bonnet rouge en teste et un gros pacquet sous son bras, encore ne sçay je pourquoy il n'avoit point ses lunettes, car c'estoit sa coustume de les porter tousjours a son nez ou a sa ceinture. [. . .] Apres s'estre deschargé de ce qu'il portoit, il se mit a se promener aux environs, et comme il vit qu'il estoit une telle heure que tout le monde dormoit chez luy et aux maisons prochaines, il descendit dedans les fossez pour faire en secret quelque chose qu'il avoit deliberé. Il y avoit fait mettre le soir de devant une cuve de la grandeur qu'il la faut a un homme qui se veut baigner. Des qu'il en fut proche il se despouilla de tous ses habits, hormis de son pourpoint, et ayant retroussé sa chemise se mit dedans l'eau jusques au nombril: il en ressortit incontinent et ayant battu un fuzil alluma une petite bougie avec laquelle il alla trois fois autour de la cuve, puis il la jetta dedans où elle s'esteignit. Il y jetta encore quantité de certaine poudre qu'il tira d'un papier, ayant en la bouche beaucoup de mots barbares et estranges qu'il ne prononçoit pas entierement, parce qu'il marmotoit comme un vieux singe fasché, estant desja tout transy de froid, encore que l'Esté fust prest à venir. En suitte de ce mystere, il recommença de se baigner et fut soigneux de laver principalement son pauvre zest qui estoit plus ridé qu'un sifflet a caille.
>
> (Francion, pp. 66-67)

The ridiculousness of his attire complements the subsequent description of the ritual bath he takes to cure his problem. By his laughable and wretched appearance, as well as by his credulity, Valentin represents a very unfavourable image of

older men.

Unfortunately for Valentin, he is married to a sensuous young woman, Laurette, which serves to emphasize his deficiencies. His consultation with a religious pilgrim (Francion in disguise) was what led to his ritual bath as a supposed cure for his impotence. He sees himself as set apart from other men, since he says:

> Apres cela je verray si je seray capable de gouster les douceurs dont la plus part des autres hommes jouyssent.
> (Francion, p. 67)

Thus, old age appears to be as severe a problem for Valentin as Francion fears it will be for himself.

Valentin succeeds in convincing himself of the reality and efficacity of the sorcery he is practicing (although he feels obliged to cross himself in the middle of his ritual).[3] He sees the appearance of Francion's valet and a dog as manifestations of the demons he has summoned.

Later, wher Valentin appears at Raymond's chateau in search of his wife, who has been a participant in an orgy there, he seems even more the befuddled old man when he is so credulous that he can be convinced that he did not in fact see Laurette in the Chateau when he had. Meanwhile, his wife is spirited back home again where she pretends to have been sick in bed since just after he left in search of her. Given the fact that we have no reason to believe that he

---

[3] Ibid., p. 67

truly loves Laurette and is willing to excuse her failings for that reason, we can only believe he is extremely weak-willed or sees himself as slightly feeble-minded, to allow himself to be so deceived. Such an attitude on the part of the victim himself merely reinforces and justifies society's disdain for the older man.

While sexual inadequacies are one of the bases of scorn for older men, these are not seen as their only faults. They are portrayed throughout the novel as a generally unlikeable group. A particularly clear description of one such old man is given by Francion, who portrays him in the following manner:

> C'estoit un vieillard goutteux le plus meschant homme de la ville, et possible de toute la contrée, bien qu'elle fût pleine de beaucoup de tres mauvais garnemens. C'estoit son seul desduit de semer des querelles par tout, et mesme entre les personnes les plus illustres. [. . .] Mais c'estoit qu'il avoit une mauvaise humeur qui le portoit tousjours a mesdire des grands. L'on recognoissoit bien qu'il ne mesdisoit de cestuy cy [le gouverneur] que pour suivre sa coustume. Car il ne l'avoit jamais veu seulement, et n'avoit ouy reciter pas une de ses actions ny bonnes ny mauvaises. Les fautes qu'il luy imputoit estoient celles qu'il avoit remarquées en d'autres: il s'imaginoit qu'ayant la mesme qualité il avoit aussi les mesmes vices. Or il avoit de la familiarité avec un personnage dont l'authorité estoit fort grande. Pour faire naistre en luy une inimitié contre le Gouverneur, il luy avoit esté dire un jour qu'il sçavoit de bonne part que ce Seigneur estoit l'homme le plus traistre du monde, qu'il se faloit garder de luy, et qu'il avoit deliberé de livrer la ville a l'estranger. Cecy fut crû comme un Oracle, pour autant que cet ancien Citoyen sçavoit si bien desguiser ses malices, que l'on le prenoit pour un homme tout remply de preudhommie.
>
> (Francion, pp. 389-390)

Not only does the man suffer from a common malady of old age, gout, he is a thoroughly unpleasant person and a liar. His sole joy in life is sowing dissention among those around him.

As well, the mask of death that this old man wears is not his only one: the visible personality of this malicious gossip is a mask for his true character. Since he "sçavoit si bien deguiser ses malices", he is not at all a man to be trusted, although he is capable of deceiving many of those around him. Possibly the great wisdom attributed in some societies to its elders is what permits this deception. Francion, or Sorel, is possibly discounting this idea as not only untrue, but dangerously misleading.

The judgement and actions of the older man are also criticized in the incident by which Clerante discovers a proposed assassination attempt on his own life. He overhears two old men discussing the plot at a wedding he is attending in disguise. They pass moral judgement on Clerante, but certainly their plotting is at least as immoral as the faults they attribute to the intended victim.

Here is the essential of their discussion:

> Clerante cependant s'estoit approché de deux vieillards [. . . et i]l faisoit semblant de ne les point ouyr, afin qu'ils ne cessassent point de parler si haut [. . .] Clerante a esté en ce païs cy quelques jours, a ce que l'on m'a apris, disoit, l'un, mais il s'en est desja allé ce matin; j'en suis fort aise, car je l'aymerois mieux en Turquie qu'icy, je l'ay tousjours hay depuis que je le cognoy. Il est extremement vicieux, il est du tout addonné au vin, et aux femmes, et fait quelques fois des actions qui

> desrogent grandement a sa qualité. [. . .] Il ne vous desplaira plus guere longtemps, respondit l'autre; je vous aprens en amy, avecque la priere d'estre secret, que ceux qui ont maintenant toute la faveur du Roy Henry II qui nous regit, se sont deliberez de se desfaire de sa personne, sans bruit, maintenant qu'il est hors de la Cour. Ils avoient envoyé icy un homme avec ce dessein là, mais il n'a pu executer leur intention. Je ne sçais s'il en aura meilleur moyen sur les chemins où il le trouvera.
>
> (Francion, pp. 276-277)

From the very beginning, the two old men set themselves apart from the group by the nature of their discussion and their apparent dislike for music, which is, by contrast, so well suited to the younger people who enjoy dancing. Music and dance are expressions of life and joy from which the older men seem to divorce themselves. Then the quality of their moral judgements must come into question, since one declares: "je l'ay tousjours hay depuis que je le cognoy", which is hardly an unprejudiced position from which to take an objective view of Clerante's behavior.

The moral weakness of the aged is also shown by the fact that, although one of them tries to attribute his remarks to the bruit commun under questioning, he quickly tells all under further interrogation:

> Le Conseiller va trouver ce vieillard qu'il luy nomma, et luy asseure qu'il faut qu'il dise tout ce qu'il sçait de ceste affaire, et que l'on l'en a desja ouy parler comme une personne qui n'en est pas ignorante. Tout ce que l'on pût tirer de luy, c'est que tout ce qu'il en a dit, n'est fondé que sur le bruit commun. L'on l'interroge avec plus d'opiniastreté et l'on aprend a la fin le lieu où pourroit estre alors celuy qui s'estoit deliberé de commettre l'assassinat, dont il depeint la façon, la stature et le vestement.
>
> (Francion, pp. 283-284)

This supposed nobleman does not exemplify either courage or great loyalty when his own life is at stake. The old man has been an accomplice in the endangering of Clerante's life, and by his confession he has placed another man, who is almost certainly fairly young, in jeopardy. He appears to be a thoroughly despicable man who consciously wishes for the death of others younger than himself.

Therefore, old men as a group, and as individuals, are seen to be generally despicable and unworthy of acceptance in human society, and are even dangerous to more worthy members of that society. Even those who resemble the aged because of illness or disability receive the same sort of treatment at the hands of the physically fit members of society. Examples of this include the cruel abuse of the vieilleux at Hortensius' party[4] and the abuse of Hortensius himself by the joke of leading him to believe he would be the next king of Poland.[5] The old, or otherwise feeble, are legitimate targets for abuse, presumably partly because they are not in a position to defend themselves. Francion, however, seems less guilty of shortcomings concerning direct abuse than the other characters in the book, so perhaps his chivalrous ideals still have some effect on his behavior. However, he generally holds older people in great contempt

---

[4] Ibid., pp. 199-202.

[5] Ibid., pp. 439-452.

even if he does not directly or physically abuse them at each opportunity.

Old women seem to suffer even more than men from this prejudice against age. Jacques Bailbé, in his study on the vieille femme, notes that:

> Sans doute ce mépris pour la vieillesse est-il issu de l'antiquité classique, vers laquelle les Humanistes se tournent avec ferveur; mais il est peut-être aussi la conséquence d'une certaine misogynie propre au Moyen-Age. La femme n'est-elle pas souvent une tentation diabolique. [. . .] Le printemps de la vie passé, on assiste en riant à sa dégradation, comme si le sentiment de la beauté et de la laideur était attaché à quelque idée morale. [6]

Old women generally seem to be objects of horror, not only for society as a whole, but most particularly for Francion. Not only have old women lost the physical beauty that so attracts Francion to sexually desirable women, their personalities often become ugly too. They frequently develop into malicious gossips who are extremely curious.

The physical ugliness of old women appears to provide a basis for attacks on them. As exemplified in the Francion, descriptions of older women can be extremely revolting with crude and insulting terms used to outline their physical degeneration.[7] The most frightful of all their qualities,

---

[6] Jacques Bailbé, "Le thème de la vieille femme dans la poésie satyrique du seizième et du début du dix-septième siècles", Bibliothèque d'humanisme et de Renaissance, 26 (1964), pp. 98-99.

[7] Francion, pp. 102,212. These passages are discussed later in this chapter.

is, however, their excessive, almost insatiable sexual desire, which, unlike the men, they are still physically capable of satisfying, if they can find a sexual partner. (It is often in this context that the above-mentioned descriptions seem to occur.)

The first old woman we are introduced to, Agathe, is presented to us initially as being curious. Sleeping one night in a hotel in the same room as Raymond and Francion, she not only eavesdrops on their conversation, but also seeks to discover Francion's identity.

> Ne sachant donc pas qui il estoit, elle eut une telle curiosité de l'apprendre, et de voir son visage, que deux heures apres elle se mit a la ruelle de sa couche, et tira du feu d'un fuzil d'Allemagne qu'elle portoit toujours, dont elle alluma une chandelle, puis elle prit le chemin du lieu où il luy sembla que celuy qui avoit tant discouru estoit couché.
> (Francion, p. 101)

In this situation, the super-imposition of an image of death, a skeleton, on a living being, is shown by the following description:

> A la voir marcher toute nuë en chemise d'un pas tremblant avec la lumiere en sa main, l'on eust dit que c'estoit un squelette qui se remuoit par enchantement.
> (Francion, p. 101)

Here, not only do we have a direct portrayal of an aged and ugly woman, but we have a clear reference to death. "Un squelette qui se remuoit par enchantement" does not have human attributes. Instead of movement directed from within, the vital force of this old woman appears to be external and supernatural. Thus the visual image of this old woman

parallels that of a living death, which could have been a frightening sight when so clearly represented.

Other old women are portrayed simply as being harmless gossips who love to talk. At a wedding, Francion overhears a conversation between some of them and relates it in this way:

> Elles disoient que les parents des mariez estoient bien chiches, qu'ils n'avoient prins qu'un violon, et qu'ils ne leur avoient pas fait assez bonne chere. Par mananda, ce disoit l'une quand je mariay ma grande fille Jacquette, il y avoit tant de viande de reste, que le lendemain qui estoit un Jeudy, il falut prier nostre Curé de nous venir aider a la manger, de peur qu'elle ne se gastast en la gardant pour le Dimanche; encore en falut il au soir en faire des aumosnes a tous les pauvres du village, et si la grande bande des cornets estoit a la nopce. Les autres tenoient de pareils propos sans songer a la danse.
> (Francion, pp. 272-273)

Thus, the aged women are shown to be not easily satisfied: they complain that there is not enough to eat at this wedding, yet one also boastfully complains that there was so much food left over at a wedding she gave, that the excess had to be distributed as alms. This discussion is simply idle gossip and not legitimate criticism is emphasized by the fact that none of these women has any desire to dance, thus not partaking of what is available to them.

It is interesting to note that even other women see older women in an unfavourable light, and these older women are prepared to act out the role that society expects of them. For example, when Perrette 'recruits' Agathe to serve in a gentleman's house, she not only clearly explains

Agathe's duties, but also why she herself would not be able to fulfill them.

> Ne t'ay je pas appris qu'il t'ayme, et ne vois tu pas que pour moy, je ne suis pas un morceau qui puisse chatoüiller son appetit? Il luy faut un jeune tendron comme toy, qui luy serve aussi bien au lict qu'a la table. [. . .] Je prestay l'oreille a tout ce qu'elle me dit, goustay ses raisons, et suivis ses conseils, me figurant qu'elle ne pouvait faillir, puisque l'aage et l'experience l'avoient renduë experte en toutes choses.
>
> (Francion, p. 110)

Here the older woman herself appears to have come to accept the idea that she is undesirable because of her age, and that life must therefore pass her by.

Another illustration of this sort of role is that Perrette and Agathe cooperate in a plot to coerce a man to give them sums of money. They conspire to give the impression that Agathe is willing to satisfy the man, but that she is closely guarded. As this deception progresses, the following action takes place:

> Là dessus Perrette sortit de sa chambre, et me dit avec une voix rude, comme si elle eust esté en colere: R'entrez icy, a qui parlez vous là bas? [. . .] mon feint parent [. . .] luy dit que celle qu'il avoit ouy crier estoit une vieille a qui l'on m'avoit donné en une estroitte garde, que pour conquester une si precieuse toison comme ma beauté, il faloit tascher d'endormir ce dragon veillant, et qu'il estoit vraysemblable que les escus estoient les enchantemens les plus asseurez.
>
> (Francion, p. 119)

Perrette comports herself according to the intolerant traditional role of the Spanish dueña. Scarron outlines more fully the role of the dueña in his Romant comique:

> Devant que d'aller plus avant, il faut que j'apprenne, à ceux qui ne le sçavent pas, que les Dames en Espagne ont des Duegnas auprés d'elles; et ces Duegnas sont à peu prés la mesme chose que les Gouvernantes ou Dames d'honneur que nous voyans auprés des femmes de grande condition. Il faut que je dise encore que ces Duegnas ou Duegnes sont animaux rigides et fascheux, aussi redoutez pour le moins que des belles-meres. [8]

Sorel has simply advanced one step further than Scarron did, in qualifying this example of the "animaux rigides et fascheux" as a "dragon". This is a particularly appropriate metaphor, since besides evoking fierceness and danger, the image of a dragon also includes scaly skin, claws, a bad temper and unpleasant (fiery) breath, all of which are characteristics which would serve to strengthen the image of the old woman which is presented in the novel. As well, she is portrayed as being deceptive and avaricious. By contrast to the girl's compliant attitude, the harsh voice, lack of understanding and officious manner of Perrette are presented to us as characteristic of the older woman. The fact that this supposedly vigilant woman can be bribed is also significant in the portrayal of the aged, who seem to range from simply malicious to corrupt.

The sexual attitudes of older women are also important and play a central part in the development of Francion's horror of them. In society's view, the older woman, no longer being sexually desirable, should be free of

---

[8] Paul Scarron, Le Romant Comique, 1651; rpt. Romanciers du XVIIe siècle, p. 651.

suspicion of illicit activity. Mlle de Gournay, as quoted by Claude Dulong, illustrates the position of the older spinister in seventeenth century French society when she writes that:

> [. . .] gaillards [. . .] font vanité ou plutôt point d'honneur, de courre et trépigner après les jeunes femmes, et de fuir celles qui passent trente ou trent-cinq ans, quelque agréable conversation qu'elles aient. [9]

This idea is confirmed by what Bergamin says to Francion concerning an old woman and her young and beautiful daughter Emilie:

> Considerez un peu combien il nous faut user d'artifice et de precautions en ce païs cy [Italie]. Je parle bien de Lucinde a Salviati, pource qu'elle est vieille et hors de soupçon, mais je ne luy parle non plus de sa fille que si elle n'en avoit point.
> (Francion, p. 472)

This implies an absolute loss of attractiveness with age, which would render these women immune to dishonour, since no man would be the least tempted by them.

However, the loss of physical beauty in women does not coincide with their loss of sexual desire. Agathe is an example of this, since, when she is seeking to discover Francion's identity, and he is sleep-walking, she is quite willing to take advantage of his mistaking her for Laurette:

> Quant est de la vieille, elle embrassa Francion aussi estroictement qu'il l'embrassoit, et pour respondre a ses caresses le baisa de bon courage,

---

[9] Mlle de Gournay, as quoted by Claude Dulong, L'amour au XVIIe siècle (Paris: Hachette, 1969), p. 24.

> estant bien aise de trouver une occasion qui ne s'estoit guere offerte a elle depuis la perte du pucellage de Venus, a la naissance de laquelle je pense, tant elle avoit d'aage, que la pointe de ses attraits estoit desja tout esmoussée.
> (Francion, p. 101)

However, Agathe seems neither surprised nor very upset when Francion awakens and reacts with horror to the very idea of having touched her.

His reaction only reinforces the attitude of great disapproval on the part of society, since he describes the woman in crude and revolting terms:

> Comment qu'ay je embrassé? dit Francion en s'eveillant en sursault [. . .]
> Francion l'ayant regardée autant que ses yeux chargez et assoupis le luy pouvoient permettre, luy respondit, ne t'en glorifie point de ce que j'ay faict, car apprens que je prenois ta bouche pour un retraict des plus salles, et qu'ayant envie de vomir j'ay voulu m'en approcher afin de ne gaster rien en ceste chambre, et de ne jetter mes ordures qu'en un lieu dont l'on ne peut accroistre l'extreme infection. J'y eusse possible apres deschargé mes excremens en te tournant le derriere et si j'ay touché a ton corps, c'est que je le prenois pour quelque vieille peau de parchemin, que je treuvois bonne a torcher un trou où ton nez ne merite pas de fleurer. Hal monsieur, dit il, en se tournant vers le Gentil-homme, vous me voulez donc persuader que j'ay caressé cette guenuche embeguinée? Ne cognoissez vous pas qu'elle n'a rien qui ne soit capable d'amortir l'affection, et de resusciter la hayne? Ses cheveux serviroient plutost aux Demons pour entraîner les ames chez Pluton, qu'a l'Amour pour les conduire sous ses lois.
> Si elle subsiste encore au monde, c'est que l'on ne veut point d'elle en Enfer et que les tyrans qui y regnent ont peur qu'elle ne soit la furie des furies mesmes.
> (Francion, pp. 102)

Francion's reaction ranges from absolute disbelief at the outset, to conditional acceptance, which he seems to try to

excuse in some strange way by his verbal abuse of the old woman. The whole situation seems unreal at first, since it is difficult to believe that he was that unaware of what he was doing, although his senses may have been deceived by sleep. More suspicious is the fact that he does not seem to be embarrassed by his actions until it is obvious Raymond is aware of what is happening.

The fact that the old woman boasts of her "conquest" shows the rarity of such events in her present life, and her awareness of Francion's probable reaction to his discovery. He cannot permit her to enjoy any sort of victory, and proceeds to insult her in the most degrading manner possible, with scatalogical references and a nauseating description of her entire physical appearance. An old woman, as portrayed by Francion's descriptions of Agathe, is a creature of revolting ugliness (genuche is a diminutif of guenon, or she-monkey), physical degeneration, and filth. While dry skin and loss of beauty seem to be part of the aging process for most people, this description links old age with many qualities such as the kind of filth alluded to by the words "un retraict des plus salles", which has no connection with old age. The whole of this description indicates more of a prejudice against old women in general than a truthful description of the woman in question. As well, there is a direct reference to the state of living death in which Agathe exists, since Francion declares that "si elle subsiste au monde, c'est que l'on ne veut point

d'elle en Enfer". To be a victim of rejection from Hell implies previous death. To be ineligible even for death is a frightful idea, for someone who fears old age as much as Francion.

The woman is obviously the object of both the hatred and the horror of Francion. To come into contact with her is simply to sully himself. It is a price that he is not willing to pay, even in retrospect, when he considers the physical pleasure he might have experienced, believing he was with the youthful and desirable Laurette.

As a younger man, however, Francion was a victim of deception resulting in his first sexual experience being with an old woman and this could have possibly influenced some of his opinions. Francion approached this woman in the dark, thinking that she was a younger hotel servant to whom he had spoken earlier. His comparison of her to the younger servant when he realizes his error once again shows both his dislike of older women and his prejudice against them, since he admits to having convinced himself that her bad qualities were good, until he realized he was dealing with an old woman:

> Sa voix rude et fort differente de celle de ma petite coquine, me fit esmerveiller infiniment, et comme j'eus appris d'elle, qui elle estoit, j'eus une si grande fascherie, que je ne vous la puis exprimer. Auparavant, la mauvaise odeur qui sortoit de son corps m'avoit semblé douce, et sa chair raboteuse m'avoit semblé polie: parce que l'imagination que j'avois, que ce fust la jeune servante, en qui j'avois remarqué toute sorte de perfections, me forçoit de prendre ces mauvaises qualitez pour de tres-bonnes. Mais a ceste heure

> là les choses me paraissoient encore plus horribles qu'elles n'estoient. De maniere qu'ayant apris de ceste vieille, que sa compagne estoit allée coucher avec le Marchand, je m'en retournay dans mon lict, resolu de n'aller plus jamais a la proye sans lumiere.
> (Francion, p. 212)

Besides the horrible physical description he gives of the woman, Francion makes clear her excessive desire and extreme gratitude.

Francion also says he is horrified to have even touched such a woman, and is determined not to allow such a mistake to occur again, yet he cynically admits only moments after describing his experience, that:

> Neantmoins il n'en faut point mentir. Je pris paraventure autant de contentement avec la vieille, que j'eusse fait avec une jeune. Je l'ay depuis esprouvé assez de fois.
> (Francion, p. 212)

In this instance, one tends to doubt Francion's sincerity in making this statement, since his words are so far in meaning from the general message of the novel.

The image of the older woman thus concentrates on her almost total lack of sexual attractiveness for the man. Often older women are reduced either to guarding the honour of younger women or selling it. These older women who are not in this sphere of life and who have no husband or children bound to support them have a very hard life since they are seen to be of no use or value to anyone, much like the older men. This situation brings on the kind of poverty that creates a living death of misery.

Not only are older people physically unattractive,

but their personalities often become malicious and very unpleasant. They may become vindictive and unsociable. Given this situation, it is not surprising that young and active people do not understand or respect them and try to avoid their company. As well, the very weaknesses and faults portrayed as being typical of the aged, make them perfect targets for those younger people who wish to criticize them.

Youth gives the attractiveness, enthusiasm, energy and opportunity to permit a series of relationships with the opposite sex. This lends interest, pleasure as well as companionship to life, and gives young people something to hope for. By contrast, even the older people who may still have the enthusiasm to be interested in love have no opportunities, whether these individuals be male or female. Since love appears as an integral part of life, lack of love would seem to be characteristic of living death.

All aged people face great disrespect and often scorn from the young people, and are not, as they are in many societies, give credit for any wisdom gained over the years. The aging process in itself offers no rewards, therefore, once one has passed puberty. It is this aging process, however, which reminds each and every character that each day lived is one day less to live before death.

In spite of all the above generalities, there is one person who seems to have escaped part of this vicious cycle. Agathe, the procurer, even though she is insulted by Francion for her appearance is not entirely without worth,

merit or purpose in this life. Therefore, she has something to live for. As she reminds Francion:

> Si vous aviez consideré que je suis vostre bonne amie Agathe qui vous a tousjours faict plaisir a Paris, vous ne me diriez pas tant d'injures! Ha, c'est donc vous, respondit Francion, en faisant l'estonné, je vous cognoy; il n'y a pas un mois que je suis guery du mal que vous me fistes gagner chez Janeton. Quant cela seroit, dit Agathe, vous ne m'en devriez point imputer de faute: aussi vray que voyla la chandelle de Dieu, la petite effrontée m'avoit juré qu'elle estoit plus nette qu'une perle d'or riant.
> (Francion, p. 103)

Thus, Agathe sees herself as worthy of some sort of respect in society, something which the older woman normally does not receive or even expect. The reference to Janeton's illness implies that even youth is subject to corrupting influences, and that these cannot necessarily be attributed to or blamed upon the aged simply because they are old. Sorel, in fact, underlines the comparative acceptability of Agathe in the world of youth when he writes:

> Comme ceste gentille vieille fut partie, laissant ceux qui l'avoient entendu discourir tous satisfaits des facetieux contes dont elle les avoit entretenus [. . .]
> (Francion, p. 139)

Thus she has both the respectability of the traditional story-teller and the interest of one who talks of the subject of sex, even if she is seen as too old to take part actively herself.

It is, in fact, her dealings in love and sexuality that gives Agathe the aura of youth that she possesses and the connection with the rapid-paced world of the young. When

she meets Raymond and Francion in the hotel, she is on her way to arrange some business with Laurette:

> Elle dit qu'elle venoit de Paris et qu'elle alloit voir Laurette afin d'essayer ses bonnes graces pour un Financier qui estoit infiniment amoureux d'elle. L'espoir du gain te fait faire cela, dit [Raymond]; ouy Monsieur, respondit elle. Si une autre personne que le Financier t'en promet un plus grand, tu l'assisteras bien plutost.
> (Francion, p. 103)

Agathe is a parasite on the vital force of life, from Francion's point of view, since she makes her living from the sexual vitality of others. Her personal interest is strictly monetary, since she is quite willing to change clients at Raymond's request. For people like Francion, the service she provides is highly beneficial, because it allows him to get a pleasure he might not otherwise be able to obtain in a given town or with a particular woman.

Probably because of her constant contact with, and her acceptability in the world of the young and sexually active, Agathe accepts her aging process much more gracefully than many others. She can even openly discuss the effects aging has had upon her, as in the following quotation:

> En fin les ans gasterent tellement le teint et les traicts de mon visage que la Ceruse et le vermillon n'estoient pas capables de me rembellir. Petit a petit le nombre de mes Amants s'amoindrissoit et je n'avois plus chez moy que des faquins, moins chargés d'argent que de desirs d'en avoir: Cela me contraignit a me tirer du rang des filles, et a me mettre du rang des meres qui cherchent la proye pour leurs petits: afin de

> m'acquitter plus accortement de cette charge, je m'habillay a la reformation, et n'y avoit point de pardons où je n'allasse gaigner des crottes.
> (Francion, pp. 127-128)

The frank attitude she displays for Francion and Raymond may also represent a return to the honesty and lack of masks which reflect youth, as it is portrayed in the Francion.

The aging process or being old have absolutely no attraction for anyone, since advanced age affords its 'victim' no mental, physical or social advantages. At the same time, they afford them many disadvantages. Eventually, everything from appearance, to their mental attitude, to their position in society turns on these people so that they have only a living death and find themselves outside the real world of the living. Under these circumstances it is hardly surprising that they should become petty and cruel, since the world treats them so unkindly. It is also quite understandable that they should see death as a release from misery. Finally, the aged have none of the rights of the living in this world, and none of the peace of the dead.

The young, however, enjoy almost every facet of earthly life with no thought to immortality. They therefore fear both death and aging because they can see their futures in the faces of those around them who are already older. This attitude leads not only to an unrealistic rejection of aging, but also to the Epicurean concept of enjoying life to the fullest by seeking pleasure and contentment. Death is seen as the natural end to life, but the aging process

becomes an undesirable stage midway between life and death. This 'living death' seems greatly to be feared, because there appears to be no purpose to life for older people and a useless life can hardly be pleasant, either for those trapped by it or those who observe its effects.

Chapter 8

Conclusions

In the course of this thesis, we have established the *Francion* in the framework of the life and works of Sorel, and then examined a primary theme in the novel itself, that of the Living Death, along with Francion's attitudes to both life and death.

In order to see the significance of these aspects of the novel, we first studied influences upon it which could be related to it -- the libertine concept of life, some of whose proponents were among Sorel's close friends, the baroque and burlesque literary styles, as well as the idealism engendered by heroic literature.

Each of these elements, particularly the baroque style and the heroic ideal, focus Francion's attention on the concepts of life and death. Baroque tends to emphasize death ir many ways, but especially by the super-imposition of symbols of death on the world of the living. When this symbolism is directly related to people, it points out the condition of Living Death. The latter is characterized by the state of physical life without mental, social or

emotional participation to any great extent in the common aspects of life. This state is usually associated with old age, when its victims appear to withdraw from involvement in the real world because of physical infirmity and degeneration, and a disinterest in cultivating normal life. The aged or infirm, who seem no longer to be able to enjoy their lives, appear to the young and particularly to Francion, as symbols of death, and even more horrifying, of Living Death. Rather than the peaceful oblivion of death, these people suffer all the indignities of life, and reap none of its rewards. For Francion and others who accept the Epicurean doctrine that life must be enjoyed and pleasurable to be worthwhile, the aging process is much more frightening than death itself. The heroic ideal serves only to strengthen this attitude, with its glorification of youth and strength and its ideal of heroic death which compares unfavourably to the slow and often painful death of old age.

Because of the emphasis put upon enjoying life to its fullest by characters in the novel, the aged are seen as beings to be scorned and unworthy of even the respect due to human beings. All their negative qualities are emphasized or exaggerated to increase the scorn and horror felt by the reader. In fact, the various aspects of the characters of the aged persons portrayed are carefully selected to show them to be generally despicable. While this attitude is founded partially on prejudice and thoughtless judgements, there are also many elements of truth in the criticism these

characters bring forth. There are many instances of the anti-social behavior of older people, varying from relatively harmless gossip to the actual involvement in a plot to kill an innocent person.

The most interesting older character in the novel is Agathe, who seems to have escaped much of the prejudice as well as the handicaps associated with the Living Death. She has sought to enjoy her life ever since she was young, and still does so in her advanced age, even if only vicariously. She has maintained her interest in and connection with the real existence of the young and it appears to be due at least in part to this that she has escaped some of the more unpleasant aspects of aging.

When she was young, Agathe learned to enjoy life to the full, and this fact permits her to recall her younger days as fond memories. Because she is not bitter with the sudden realization that she has wasted her life, as probably happens to many other older people, she is content and at peace with herself. At least partly for this reason, her character is pleasant and people can enjoy being with her.

Agathe has aged physically, however, even if she has avoided it mentally to a large extent. She is aware of her changed appearance, accepts it and can discuss it openly. She regrets her lost beauty, but is secure in the knowledge that she used her beauty well while she had it. Because Agathe physically ressembles other older people, she falls victim to the same sort of insults about her appearance as

they do. In this way she too partially represents the Living Death and the imagery of death is imposed on her life as it is on those of others. She is however aware of her position and accepts her imminent death, but refuses to give up her right to enjoy her life up to the last moment, which will protect her from many of the torments of the idle and unhappy aged.

Because of her distinctiveness, Agathe is an important element in the novel. Francion admires Agathe and finds her an agreable story-teller. He is upset by her physical appearance, but enjoys her personality. When he sees the twisted minds and bodies of other aged people, however, he is very ill-at-ease. He does not seem to fear his own death, but lives in horror of the existence of these people in limbo between true life and death. In fact, Francion faces his own death with equanimity on several occasions in the novel, but is most reluctant to resign himself to an existence such as that of the aged. To avoid this eventuality as long as possible, Francion refuses to renounce the freedoms of youth, trying to remain in a world without responsibility. His first major step into the duties and bonds of adulthood is his marriage, which occurs at the very end of the novel. Even when he has decided to take this step, Francion hesitates and seems reluctant to forsake the world of bachelorhood where he could seek out many different women, travel and spend at will, and enjoy life to the full, with very few limitations on his personal freedom.

In conclusion, the opinions Francion and Sorel express about both life and death, as well as the horrible Living Death, constitute very interesting commentaries on the meaning and purpose of life in general, not just for the seventeenth century in France, but with relation to any era and any culture.

Chapter 9

Annotated Bibliography

There is a relatively complete annotated bibliography of Sorel's work and the works of his critics in:

Knystautas, Beverly Sue. "Charles Sorel: An Inventory, État Présent and Appraisal." Diss. University of Connecticut 1973. 302 pp.

This thesis is a very useful tool for all sorts of research on Sorel and his works. It is essentially an annotated bibliography of Sorel's works and of books and articles which deal with either the life or the works of Sorel. Knystautas includes references to the locations of copies of Sorel's works. However, both Sorel's works and the critical material are listed chronologically, and there is no index to aid in finding the works of any one critic or on any one subject. Knystautas also adds an analysis of Sorel as a writer and of his importance in seventeenth-century French literature.

Unfortunately, the bibliography of the critical material is not up-to-date. (In this annotated bibliography, I am including both works which apeared since the publication of this thesis and those I have discovered which were not included in Knystautas' work.) In spite of the omissions and the system of organization of references, Knystautas' thesis is detailed and provides us with much information in a single volume.

I have divided my annotated material into two sections: "Works Not Included in Knystautas' Bibliography" and "Works Published Since Knystautas' Thesis (1973)".

Works Not Included in Knystautas' Bibliography

The following articles and books were not included by Knystautas in her bibliography and are included here in an attempt to complete her work.

Abdallah, Nahwat. "Le Vocabulaire de Charles Sorel dans L'Histoire comique de Francion." Diss. Université de Paris, Lettres, 1956. 879 pp.

(Not consulted.)

Baldensperger, M. F. "La Tradition moderne de l'Humour. Les Burlesques: Sorel, Furetière, Scarron. -- Le 'Virgile travesti'. -- Le 'Roman comique'." Revue des cours et conférences, 21, April 5, 1912-1913, pp. 741-749.

Baldensperger deals with the Berger extravagant, the Roman bourgeois and the Roman comique. He defines these works as burlesque, and the burlesque as a literary revolt against constricting rules. He notes the use of parody and satire in these works and says they are realist in the sense that they try to counter the unreality of fictional works.

He sees Lysis in Sorel's Berger extravagant as a sort of Don Quijote, who is more childish and crazier than the Spanish hero, and quotes the example of Lysis believing he

is transformed into a tree as evidence for the unhealthy affects of fiction on the character.

Battista, Piero. Attualità del "Francion" di Sorel. Rome: Ediz. Conte e C., 1964. 201 pp.

(Not consulted; see article of similar title listed below.)

----------. "Attualità del Francion", Le Lingue Straniere, 14, no. 5 (1965), pp. 14-26.

This article appears to be a summary of the previously mentioned work, since its areas of study are broad and the observations not very detailed or original. Battista sees the Francion as Sorel's best work which is just recently receiving the critical attention it deserves. He maintains it is a book of interest to modern readers because it is well-written and deals with problems in seventeenth-century society that still exist today. He maintains that the novel lays the foundations of realist literature, but escapes its faults.

Bogliolo, Giovanni. "L'elemento satirico nel Francion di Sorel", in Studi in Onore Arturo Massolo, Studi Urbinati, anno 41, new series B, no. 1-2 (1967) t. 2, pp. 1005-1011.

Bogliolo proposes that there is a fundamental conflict between the social satire of Sorel and the libertine attitude shown by Francion in the novel. Part of this conflict comes about as a result of so much of the

story being told from Francion's point of view with himself as narrator. The reader's identification with Francion is thus greatly strengthened and the ideas he puts forward become stronger than those of the author-narrator.

However, the critic sees Francion as basically an abstraction, a tool for the spreading of Sorel's ideas on society. He also refers to the Francion as being similar to Homer's Odyssey but lacking the necessary spirit to make it great. This is because it is the criticism of society and not the nature or chronology of events in Francion's life that is of importance.

Bugliani, Ivanna. "L'elemento comico nel Francion", Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, ser. 2, vol. 35, fasc. 1-2 (1966), pp. 27-55.

Bugliani feels that previous critics of the Histoire comique de Francion have undervalued the comic aspect of the novel, which is very obvious to her. She cites examples such as the first scene of the novel with Valentin's ridiculous clothing and actions, and Agathe in the hotel when she tries to discover Francion's identity. In the first episode, it is a couple of peasants who discover Catherine tied to the outside of the castle and explode into raucous laughter. The attitude of the common people contrasts with the indifference or impassiveness of the wiser characters in facing the good or bad things in life.

Direct discourse is useful in establishing comic

figures, and Sorel tends to use ironic comments at the end of each incident, which indicate his personal distance from such episodes. It is interesting to note that most of the comic incidents occur in the first part of the novel and in the relation of the relatively distant past.

Bugliani, Ivanna. "Francion eroe libertino", Saggi e ricerche di letteratura francese, 7 (1966), p. 9-68.

Bugliani establishes the precedent and validity of comparing the attitudes of Francion and the libertin Théophile de Viau, and then examines the evidences of these attitudes throughout the work. She sees Théophile's theory of esprits forts and esprits faibles borne out in the action of the book. (Esprits forts are those people with the courage to live differently from most people.) Francion seems to be an example of an esprit fort, appears aware and proud of his superiority to lesser men and shares an interest in enjoying the present moment with the libertins. Even as a student, Francion had these characteristics, since, Bugliani asserts, the purpose of the group of "braves et généreux" was primarily to praise Francion.

The critic examines Raymond's orgy in great detail, seeking libertin philosophies exemplified in the actions of the characters. She also notes death imagery and its significance in comparison to the vitality symbolised by sexual activity. She concludes that love is the only true divinity of libertinage, and since eternal youth and

capacity for love are impossible, old age and death are always shadows over the pleasures of the libertins.

Cserba, Olga. Charles Sorel critique. Budapest: 1933 (Bibl. Institut, fr. Budapest, XXV).

(Not consulted; in Hungarian.)

Etiemble, René. "Un écrivain généreux: Charles Sorel", Hygiène des lettres, V: C'est le Bouquet. Paris: Gallimard, 1967, pp. 23-35.

This article, despite the date of publication of the book, is dated 1954. It defends Sorel from his critics in a general way, although most of its examples are drawn from only one work, the Francion. Sorel is viewed as a généreux writer who wrote for all classes and many interests. Etiemble draws parallels between Sorel and well-known and respected writers such as Descartes or Molière, defending Sorel's writings by comparing them to related or similar episodes in the writings of these authors. For example, he cites the language used by the peasants in Francion and compares it to that used by Molière's peasants in Dom Juan. While Sorel is criticized for the inclusion of all levels of language in his works, Molière is praised for the authenticity of the language used in his play. Etiemble sees this difference in judgement as unfair. He also maintains that it is the picaresque aspect of the novel that draws all its separate episodes together.

Godenne, R. "Les débuts de la nouvelle narrée à la première personne, 1685-1800", Romanische Forschungen, 82 b., h. 3 (1970), pp. 253-267.

Godenne deals with the development of the short story related in the first person. She notes that: Sorel realized the format's potential, since the nouvelle produced an impression of greater authenticity and more interest in the character involved. In the second half of the seventeenth century, other novelists take up Sorel's lead and by the end of the eighteenth century, the technique is perfected.

Gottsmann, Edeltraut. "Charles Sorel's Polyandre." Diss. Innsbruck 1950. 149 pp.

(Not consulted.)

Halévy, Daniel. "Sorel et Péguy", Education moderne, year 3, no. 3-4 (1955), pp. 1-2.

(Not consulted.)

Hamel, Marcelle. "Un critique de Montaigne au XVIIe siècle: Charles Sorel", Bulletin de la Société des amis de Montaigne, series 3, no. 31 (1964), pp. 44-50.

This short article gives us limited information on a specific area of study in Sorel's Bibliothèque françoise, since it deals only with Sorel's critique of Montaigne. Hamel begins with a short biography of Sorel but passes quickly on to his remarks on Montaigne. This author is mentioned several times in the Bibliothèque françoise, and

there is also a substantial section of the work devoted to his Essais. Drawing frequently on the judgements of other critics, as he did throughout the Bibliothèque françoise, Sorel defends Montaigne's work against those who allege that it lacks style and organisation and that it might encourage its readers to vice. He judges the lack of organisation to parallel the situation of a conversation, and also states that Montaigne purposely ignored the accepted rules of writing to show his contempt for them.

Hamel notes that Sorel's comments indicate a thorough reading of Montaigne's work, even though they are generally not original. However, she misses an easily-drawn analogy that Sorel and Montaigne were frequently accused of the same writing faults and that this could have influenced Sorel's judgements of the earlier writer.

Jourlait, Daniel. "Le Héros et l'anti-héros chez Honoré d'Urfé et Charles Sorel." Diss. Université de Paris, IV, Lettres, 1971. 397 pp.

(Not consulted.)

Kocher, Myron L. "Charles Sorel and the Drama", Furman Studies, 21, no. 4, pp. 34-36.

In this short article, Kocher discusses Sorel's critical attitude to drama in his Bibliothèque françoise and in La Connoissance des bons livres. Kocher sees the first work as a "handbook of baroque literature" because it

included works produced from 1538 to 1640 and does not force the author's judgements on his readers.

In the Bibliothèque françoise, Sorel scarcely mentions the classic dogma of the three unities in his discussion of drama, which is included with poetry in general. He even supports Corneille's Cid, which was criticized for its failure to maintain various dramatic requirements of classicism.

In the Connoissance des bon livres, a later work, there is more material on dramatic production, since Sorel notes there are more and more plays being written and produced. He feels drama is aided by the stage production.

Kocher concludes that Sorel did not accept any single standard in the judgement of literature, and thus could not accept the classical theory of the three unities as an absolute.

Kocher, Myron. "A Critical Edition of La Bibliothèque françoise of Charles Sorel". Diss. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill 1965. 675 pp.

This dissertation consists of an annotated verson of the first (1664) edition of Sorel's Bibliotheque françoise, including La Guide de l'Histoire de France. Kocher introduces the work and situates it in seventeenth century French literature in the five introductory chapters. His annotations in the edition itself simplify the use of the Bibliotheque as a reference work for the modern reader.

Kocher's many notes give information concerning the authors and works mentioned or alluded to by Sorel, although, understandably, considering the age of the work, there are also frequent notations that Kocher was not able to identify the reference. Less forgivable, however, are the typographical errors which appear in the text, and errors in the numbering of footnotes. Kocher includes Sorel's "Fautes à corriger" with what must be the original page numbering, which is of limited use to the reader of the critical edition. A detailed index of page references is included in the back of the second volume for quick reference to any author or work noted by Kocher.

Lachèvre, F. "Théophile de Viau, auteur de Francion?", Bulletin Bibliophile, 1936, pp. 198-204.

This is the reference as it appears in Alexandre Cioranescu, Bibliographie de la littérature française du dix-septième siècle. (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1966), vol. 3, p. 1873, no. 63458. This article could not be located and the reference is probably incorrect, but it is included here to indicate the presumed existence of an article.

Leroy, Jean-Pierre. "La littérature médiévale dans la Bibliothèque française de Charles Sorel", La Société française de littérature comparée, Actes du septième congrès, Moyen âge et littérature comparée, Poitiers, 27-29 mai, 1965. Paris: Didier, 1967, pp. 103-112.

Leroy discusses Sorel's Bibliothèque françoise. He notes that Sorel felt a sound knowledge of works published in French (and not necessarily those in Latin or Greek) would suffice for the education of many people. His work was therefore a listing of those French works with which the seventeenth-century honnête homme should be familiar.

Leroy finds the work notable in that even though it was published when classicism flourished, Sorel shows a remarquable tolerance in his judgements, leaving to the reader the final judgement on the works he discusses. In his area of special interest, medieval literature, Leroy finds the twelve pages of commentary to cover a great many works, but marvels at the completness of the survey (taking into consideration the re-discovery of some great medieval works subsequent to the publication of the Bibliothèque françoise). Sorel criticizes poetry and novels in general in the medieval section, but passes quite favorable judgements on individual works in these genres. Leroy finds especially appealing Sorel's aversion for up-dated texts in contemporary publications of medieval works.

Although Leroy recognizes the prejudice against Sorel's work as incomplete or poorly documented, he feels it is deserving of recognition because it has achieved a certain historical critical perspective with regards to medieval literature.

Loch, Ph. Charles Sorel als literarischer Kritiker. Wurtzburg, 1934. 71 pp.

(In German; not consulted.)

Lough, J. "Another Copy of the First Edition of Sorel's Francion", French Studies, 20, no. 2 (1966), pp. 121-122, with plate.

This very short article informs us that another copy of the original edition of L'Histoire comique de Francion has been discovered in the Durham University Library. Although it has been listed in the catalogue of this library for over a hundred years, it apparently had never been noticed.

Lough discusses slight differences between this edition and the one published in Adam's Romanciers du XVIIe siècle and includes a copy of the title page as a plate.

Meyer, G. "Le Francion de Sorel (1622) [sic], et la comédie de Molière", Les Humanités (Classes de lettres, sections modernes), March 1966, pp. 24-25.

Meyer indicates that Sorel's Francion served or could have served as a source of ideas, characters and comic scenes for Molière's plays. He cites various examples of similarities of episodes or ideas, such as the husband in Francion who feigns death to observe his wife's reaction, which parallels the wife's actions in the Malade imaginaire. He also compares the episode where Hortensius thinks he is to become King of Poland with the Mamamouchi ceremony in

Molière's Le Bourgeois gentilhomme.

Meyer also very accurately observes that characters such as Sorel's avare would provide all sorts of material for other literary works. He concludes that Sorel's and Molière's works have much in common in basic concepts and that Sorel particularly distinguishes himself as an observer of human nature in the Francion.

Minář, Jaroslav. "De Francion à Gil Blas", Philologica Pragensia, 9, no. 4 (1966), pp. 364-374.

Minář's article, in spite of its title, deals primarily with Lesage's Gil Blas. Sorel is viewed as one of the creators of the novel form, although the Francion is only one step in a series that form the evolution of the genre. The Francion is a "prototype" of the novel, in spite of Sorel's opposition to the form. Minář also gives the character Francion as much importance as Gil Blas or Figaro as a literary personality.

Minář notes that both Lesage and Sorel were attempting to present the realities of the societies in which they lived in their novels. He goes on to point out various characteristics of Lesage's novel with which to support his contention that Lesage is an innovator in the development of the novel. In a comparison with the Francion, he states:

> Nous pouvons voir que dans le roman de Francion la destinée picaresque du héros prend une évolution rectiligne des événements et des sujets, dont le

> rythme est peu differencié et peu modulé. En cela, Francion ne demeure que l'esquisse de roman. (p. 371).

In spite of Minář's assertion, the idea that the Francion is a simple outline seems difficult to accept, since there is considerable character development, events are presented in an order and a manner calculated to arouse the reader's interest, and there is a definite variance in this presentation. In fact, the above quotation seems to conflict with Minář's earlier contention about the importance of the novel and of its hero.

Morillot, Paul. Le roman français durant l'époque classique 1610-1800. First edition. London and Toronto: S. M. Dent and Sons; Paris: J. M. Dent et fils; New York: E. P. Dutton, 1921, pp. 90-102.

Knystautas lists a work described as follows: Le Roman en France depuis 1610 jusqu'à nos jours (lectures et esquisses). Paris: G. Masson, ed., Librairie de l'Académie de Médecine, 1892, which would appear to be the same work despite the identification of the above title as a first edition. (The page reference for material on Sorel in the latter work is pp. 94-104.)

This text is composed of short biographies of many novelists and extracts from their works. It is noteworthy that as early as 1921 Sorel was included in such a work and that three extracts from his novels are presented, since there had been relatively little interest in his works up to that time.

Morillot outlines a short biography of Sorel and credits him with "un grand rôle dans l'histoire du roman [. . .] il se posa en adversaire du goût public, et en défenseur du vieil esprit gaulois refoulé" (pp. 91-92). Extracts from Le Berger extravagant, Francion and Polyandre follow.

Nicolet, M. "Le réalisme romanesque chez Furetière et Sorel". Thèse principale, Doctorat d'Etat, 1957.

(Not consulted.)

Rathje, Jurgen. "Le roman picaresque en France au XVIIe siècle avant Francion, la définition du roman picaresque réconsidérée et appliquée à La vie généreuse des Mercelots, Gueux, et Boesmiens, à L'Euphormion et aux Fragments d'une histoire comique". Diss., troisième cycle, University of Strasbourg, 1968. 178 pp.

(Not consulted.)

Sétaro, Giuseppe. "Francion dans la vie et dans l'oeuvre de Charles Sorel". Diss. University of Toulouse 1961. 217 pp.

(Not consulted; see article of same title listed below.)

----------. "Francion dans la vie et dans l'oeuvre de Charles Sorel", Revue des Langues Vivantes, 28, no. 2 (1962), pp. 134-148.

(Although this article was noted by Knystautas in her bibliography (p. 189-190), it is included here as an additional reference for the reader since it is an extract

from the above thesis.)

Sutcliffe, F. E. "Le réel dans le Francion de Sorel [résumé de communication]", Le Réel dans la littérature, Actes du Xe Congrès de la Fédération internationale des langues et littératures modernes, Strasbourg, 29 août-3 septembre, 1966, publiés par Paul Vernois (Actes et colloques, 6). Paris: C. Klincksieck, 1967, p. 207.

This extremely short outline of a lecture deals with the treatment of reality in the novel Francion. Criticism of the genre by men such as LaNoue, Langlois, Camus and Sorel himself maintained that the novel ought to be realistic, since it cannot be real in the sense of historical fact. Only in this way can it be considered to serve a useful purpose in society rather than simply confusing its readers.

Because of the length of the summary, only a very limited idea of Sutcliffe's paper can be achieved.

Tilton, Elizabeth Meier. "Concept and Technique in the Anti-Novels of Charles Sorel". Diss. Yale University 1970. 322 pp.

Tilton considers L'Histoire comique de Francion, Le Berger extravagent and Polyandre to be Sorel's anti-novels. A plot summary of each is offered in the appendices and Tilton analyses each one in the body of her dissertation. She notes first of all a contradiction between Sorel's stated aim to destroy fiction and his apparent desire, shown by his works themselves, to create an example for other

novelists to follow.

Tilton studies characters with literary ambitions in the Francion, as well as Sorel's literary and social criticism. One area where Sorel strongly attacks contemporary fiction is that of idealized love, since his novel is more realistic in relation to this basic theme.

Sorel objects to the useless fiction of novels and in Le Berger extravagant tries to create an illusion of reality by various devices, and by maintaining plausibility. Often stories are told in the first person or substantiated by a witness. To increase the impression of reality, Sorel often closes an adventure with a meal or sleep.

Tilton defines Polyandre as an alternative to the conventional novel. However, the work was never finished because it was a commercial failure. The book has a good deal of social criticism and moves slowly because Sorel tries to heighten realism by accounting for all the activities of the characters.

Works Published Since Knystautas' Thesis (1973)

The following annotated bibliography is intended to bring Knystautas' work up to date and assist scholars searching for the most recent material published on Charles Sorel and his works.

Barko, Ivan. "Une source du Dom Juan de Molière: le Polyphile de Sorel?", Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France, 74e année, no. 3 (1974), pp. 469-474.

Barko uses a detailed comparison augmented by quotations from the two works under discussion to show that part of Molière's inspiration for Dom Juan's concept and strategy of love, comes from Sorel's Polyphile ou l'Amant de plusieurs Dames; La Défense de ses diverses amours avec la réponse et la replique (1663).

Barko finds several points of similarity between the works, although in Polyphile, these examples are spread over nineteen pages. While Polyphile loves several women at one time, and Dom Juan loves a succession of women one at a time, they both agree that beauty is the ideal which is the inspiration of their love and neither accepts the concept of fidelity to one woman.

There are, however, some important differences

between the ideas of the two authors' lovers. Molière's Dom Juan fears the flight of time and does not wish to sacrifice his youth to any one woman, while Polyphile does not discuss this aspect in his declarations. Dom Juan finds himself drained of passion once the prize is gained and is pleased to search for a new conquest, while Polyphile wants simultaneous liasons with several women.

Thus Barko seeks to illustrate that Molière incorporated some aspects of Sorel's Polyphile in the character of his Dom Juan, but maintained a very separate and independent creation in his play.

Cazenave, Gil. "L'image du Prince dans les premiers romans de Charles Sorel", XVIIe siècle, no. 105 (1974), pp. 19-28.

Cazenave discusses Sorel's portrayal of the Prince or King in Francion, Cléagénor et Doristée, the Nouvelles françaises, and l'Orphize de Chrysante. He notes that when Sorel begins writing, France is emerging from the ruinous Regency period and politics forms a world of intrigue.

In l'Orphize de Chrysante, Sorel shows some aspects of his 'ideal' Prince by contrasting the wicked Prince Cénostrate with the nearly perfect Lygdamis. The latter reduces taxes, institutes voluntary military service, and wishes to maintain personal contact with his subjects. Cazenave states that Lygdamis is a traditional representation of the humanist ideal of the Ruler.

Francion also expresses his political ideas in l'Histoire comique de Francion. He sees the King as just another human being, and because of his générosité is permitted to address the King of France with absolute frankness, while the King respects his ideas.

Sorel's political philosophy is never clearly shown in his works and is certainly not consistent throughout his literary output, since some of his work as historiographer constitutes virtual monarchist propaganda. In the Francion, however, Sorel's ideas on the role and qualities of the Prince are more clearly shown than in any of his other fictional works, and here he shows a strongly humanistic point of view.

Cenerini, Lucia Moretti, ed. De la connoissance des bons livres ou examen de plusieurs auteurs. Rome: Bulzoni, 1975. 400 pp.

(Not consulted.)

Review of the above work by Guido Saba in Studi francesi, anno 19, fasc. 3, no. 57 (1975), pp. 502-505.

The reviewer criticises Cenerini for various technical faults in her edition, such as unjustified orthographic changes and incomplete, inconsistent, inaccurate or unsuitable footnoting. He does however approve her choice of the 1671 edition as the basis of her work. He also discusses her analysis of the work and her use of biographical details of Sorel's life.

Review of the above work by Maxime Gaume in Revue d'histoire de la France, 76e année, no. 6 (1976), pp. 999-1000.

This reviewer provides a more detailed analysis of Sorel's work and concentrates less on the work of the editor herself. He praises her for attempting the difficult task of defining the critique bourgeois of seventeenth-century France, which no one had previously done in such detail. He praises her notes as indicative of a "solide érudition". Although he feels the orthographic changes are very debatable, he states that the work will be useful to scholars of seventeenth-century literary history.

Collinet, Jean-Pierre and Jean Serroy, eds. Romanciers et Conteurs du XVIIe siècle. Paris: Ophyrs, 1975. 159 pp.

This work consists of extracts taken from seventeenth-century French novels and short stories by various authors, which are grouped according to styles and themes. Several extracts from Sorel's works are published, including some from Le Berger extravagant, the Francion, Polyandre, and Les Nouvelles françaises. Each extract is accompanied by a short commentary on the work from which it is taken and the editors situate the story of the extract in the action of the novel.

Cramer, Hazel. "The Role of the Reader: A Study of Five Early Seventeenth Century Novels." Diss. Cornell University 1976. 278 pp.

Cramer discusses the role of the reader in five French novels published from 1623 to 1625. The novels studied are: Palombe ou la femme honorable by J.-P. Camus, La Diane française by Gilbert Saulnier DuVerdier, Le Romant Satyrique by Jean de Rannel, Fragments d'une histoire comique by Théophile de Viau and Sorel's Histoire comique de Francion. Besides all being published in the same era, these novels are all concerned with contemporary society, morals and the presentation of a value system.

Cramer discusses the concept of the role of the reader in literature, and the authors' manipulation of the reader in general terms, before passing to a detailed analysis of the role of the reader in each novel. With regard to the Francion, she notes that the critics disagree on just about every aspect of the novel.

The first version of the novel (1623 edition) is notable because the author is very unobtrusive, and even the narrator does not really pass judgements or try to influence the reader's reaction to certain characters or the events they relate. Most of the action in these first seven books is related in the first person by the characters themselves, leaving the reader free to form his own opinions. Sorel even provides us with a surrogate for the audience in the person of Raymond, whose main role is as a listener for these

first-person narrations.

The one area where Sorel tries to manipulate his presentation is with regard to Agathe, who is 'isolated' because her views are the most radical ones expressed in the book, and they are presented as the opinions of her friend, Perrette (Francion, p. 235). In spite of this different treatment, Agathe is not judged or criticized by the author or by Francion (although in later editions she will be criticized by the anonymous narrator (Francion, p. 1276).

Cramer notes that in the revisions in the second and third editions, Sorel removes the freedom of the reader to draw his or her own conclusions, by inserting his own moralizing commentaries. There are fewer direct quotes from the characters and more interventions on the part of the narrator. However, she maintains the novel's evolution depends not only on these changes, but also on the change in the reader's perception of the book, as he or she reads it.

Cramer concludes that in the first edition of the Francion, Sorel left the reader the freedom to make his own judgements, whereas in the later editions he was more openly moralistic. However, it is Sorel's libertinage which permitted the freedom offered the reader in the first edition. Both Sorel's allowing of individuality in the reader's judgements and his subsequent weakening of this quality are significant reflections of the changing circumstances in France during the years 1623 to 1633, when the three editions of the Francion appeared.

Franchetti, Anna Lia. "Il 'Berger extravagant' o l'inganno della rappresentazione", Paragone, anno 27, numero 318 (1976), pp. 45-68.

Franchetti's article focuses on what is presented as the central problem of the novel, rappresentazione, performance or representation. Though Le Berger extravagant was later titled L'Anti-Roman, Franchetti sees Sorel's attack on the presentation of fiction as reality as wider than solely a criticism of novels, being also a criticism of the theatre. Since the events of the book are really like a theatrical performance, engineered by Hircan and his friends, in which the major role is taken by Lysis, who sees his experiences as real life, this interpretation seems justified. Thus the work is an imitation of an imitation of life, with Sorel trying to show the absurdity of such imitations. Sorel makes anti-theatrical comments in the lengthy Remarques accompanying the work and emphasises the use of gestures, which he feels are missing in a playscript. He also attacks poetic language, both directly and by inclusion of a "portrait" of Lysis' beloved Charite, which incorporates metaphorical references into the woman's appearance to ridicule the poetic language involved.

While it becomes difficult to distinguish reality and madness in the course of the book, Franchetti illustrates that Sorel leaves us hints to indicate that the gentlemen who helped Lysis and even the reader are the real fools, and that Lysis was the most lucid person involved. (She admits

there is a partial contradiction of this hypothesis in the references to Lysis' madness being caused by his love for Charite.)

Gadja, Daniel Anthony. "A Critical Edition of Sorel's La Maison des Jeux (1657)." Diss. University of California, Irvine 1973. 22-350-96 pp.

Gadja's two-volume thesis consists largely of a photocopy of the first volume of La Maison des Jeux. (For this reason the title of his study seems misleading, since there are in fact two volumes of the same name plus another three volumes entitled Nouveau recueil des pièces, Les Récréations galantes, and probably Recueil des pièces en prose, which should be included in the full body of Sorel's Maison des Jeux according to Gadja.)

The Maison des Jeux was published in 1642 and 1657 and it is the second edition on which Gadja bases his work, asserting there are very few textual differences in the two editions. Gadja discusses the second and subsequent volumes, the format of the work and Sorel's social attitudes. His notes and commentary in the second volume contain useful information, but would be more easily consulted if they were incorporated into the text itself, and if there were notations in the text that a footnote exists for a particular reference.

Garavini, Fausta. "La Casa dei giochi", Paragone, anno 26, no. 3 (1975), pp. 3-47.

Garavini's article deals with both La Maison des Jeux (1642) by Sorel and Les Jeux de l'Inconnu (1630) by the Comte de Cramail. She first deals with the works separately and then compares them. Sorel chooses a fictional and unreal situation, a group of Parisians gathered in the countryside, calling themselves by Greek names and playing a variety of conversational games, as the setting for his work. The book itself becomes theatrical, with Sorel's presentation of the games in a social context instead of just listing them with descriptions. The characters become actors, who even change roles from participating actors to narrators. An important element is the criticism of works of fiction and even anti-novels for their unreality. Significantly, Sorel ends his work with the Jeu de la métamorphose, symbolic of the ever-changing universe. Thus the game becomes the metaphor for the unreality of life.

Garavini notes the friendship between Sorel and Cramail in the 1621-1623 period, and the literary cooperation between the two. Garavini outlines Cramail's Jeux de l'Inconnu and relates similarities between this work and various of Sorel's writings. She notes that although Cramail's work was published first, Sorel's Maison des Jeux may have been written as early as 1625 (as evidenced by references in the Francion and La Science des choses corporelles).

Review of the above article by F. Robello in Studi francesi, anno 19, fascicolo 3, no. 57 (1975), pp. 544-545.

This brief review summarizes the contents of Garvini's article and her analysis of both works. The reviewer notes that this is an original contribution to a heretofore neglected area of study -- French baroque prose literature.

Garavini, Fausta. "Francion rivisitado: diacronia d'una struttura", Saggi e ricerche de letteratura francese, 14, pp. 39-107.

This long article is a study of varied aspects of the Francion, analysed from the point of view of the three different editions of the work published by Sorel from 1623 to 1633. The author begins by stating that the Francion is the most unusual and interesting novel of the seventeenth century (pp. 39-40), and by expressing her disappointment in the fact that it is not recognized as such. A careful study of the changes in each edition indicates that Sorel not only removed some of the contentious passages in his novel, but also that he chose to emphasise certain of his criticisms and that he was presenting a message on a different level in each edition. Therefore, it is as significant to study additions as deletions, because the former do not always follow Sorel's stated objective of a prudent revision of his novel, and certain edifying inserts are obviously set in to distract scrupulous critics.

Garavini analyses such events as Francion's conversion to love for one woman and his reaction to the simplicity and honesty of the shepherd's way of life. She also studies the differences in the prefaces to the three editions, and the interchangeability of the author-narrator-character roles throughout the work.

Garavini's article is lengthy, many-faceted, and at times it seems somewhat disjointed. This appears to be largely due to the arrangement of the study according to editions and then by the types of changes made to the text. However, the author's comments are carefully researched and an important analysis of the significance of the variants in the three editions is offered.

Review of the above article by F. Robello in Studi frances, anno 19, fascicolo 3, #57 (1975), p. 544.

Robello outlines the areas of Garavini's article briefly. He recommends it as a modern, serious analysis which successfully deals with a wide area of study using modern language and presentation.

Goldin, Jeanne. "Structure métaphorique et unité narrative: le livre I, de l'Histoire comique de Francion", Papers on French Seventeenth Century Literature, no. 4-5, summer 1976, pp. 117-140.

(Not consulted.)

Green, Maria A. and David L. Rubin. "Dossier sur L'histoire comique de Francion" in Oeuvres critiques, I, i, De Jodelle à Guilleragues. Paris: Editions Jean-Michel Place, 1976, pp. 69-70.

(Not consulted.)

Griffiths, Michael and Wolfgang Leiner. "Some thoughts on the names of the characters in Sorel's Histoire comique de Francion", Romance Notes, 15, no. 3 (1974), pp. 445-453.

This somewhat vague article deals exclusively with the names of the characters in Sorel's Francion and their meaning or significance. Sorel's penchant for social commentary is continued even to his choice of these names. The authors of the article trace the sources and meanings of the names of several characters to their etymological, mythological or literary origins. These interpretations vary from the fairly obvious origins of the name of 'Valentin' to a rather obscure and poorly developed explanation of the source of 'Agathe'.

The justification of the study is the fact that Sorel draws the readers' attention to the names of his characters on various occasions (a point of view supported by quotes from the text) and that the names therefore have a meaning and purpose in themselves.

Guthrie, J. Richard, Jr. "An Analysis of style and purpose in the first epidode of the Histoire comique de Francion", Romance Notes, 15, no. 1 (1973), pp. 99-103.

This article deals with the first episode of Francion in which Valentin follows a mystical ritual in the hopes of

improving his sexual capacities.

Guthrie describes Francion as the 'Candide' of the seventeenth century and as a super-realist who sets out to conflict with super-idealists. However, Guthrie states in his conclusion that "Francion represents the symbol of a balanced, all-encompassing reality [. . .] It is not a question of reality or idealism, but reality and idealism." Guthrie's assertions are highly contradictory, although the second is probably closer to the truth than the first.

Guthrie quotes from Valentin's "address to the pilgrim", which is in fact a monologue, and states that the village priest helps Valentin to find reality by the "light of the true religion". The quotation appears to be misinterpreted and the second statement very dubious, in light of Francion's irreverent attitude toward the Church and her priests. These factors limit the value of this analysis of the first episode in the Francion.

Review of the above article by W. Leiner in Studi francesi, nuova serie, anno 18, fasc. 11, no. 53 (1974), pp. 335-336.

This review in French contests several of Guthrie's premises and conclusions. Firstly, Leiner disagrees that it is Francion himself and not an autonomous narrator who presents the actions of the first episode to the reader. He also criticizes the fact that the central concept of 'reality' is not defined by the author of the article. In

the end he also criticizes the obscurity of certain passages.

Kay, Burf. "A writer turns against literature: Charles Sorel's Le Berger extravagant", Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa, no. 43 (1973), pp. 277-291.

Kay's well-written article sets out Sorel's stated purpose in the writing of this work as well as establishing its significance in relation to his other works. Le Berger extravagant was written as an Anti-Novel, or as literary criticism. The pastoral novel set in an idealized fantasy world was very popular in France during the seventeenth century, but Sorel detested it. He wrote this work as a satire in an attempt to destroy the pastoral's popularity.

The hero of the work, Lysis, tries to impose the fantasies of the pastoral novel on the reality of the world, by attempting to live as an idyllic shepherd. He succeeds in deluding himself for a considerable period of time, because he is aided and protected by rich gentlemen who become his friends. One of these, Clarimond (who Kay sees as Sorel's spokesman), finally tells Lysis the truth about his fantasies and he is forced to give up his imaginary world. However, the lesson that we must live with reality is very weak, since Lysis receives a reward for forsaking his fantasies rather than a punishment for living them so long. (He is married to his great love and assured a good life financially by his generous friends.) Thus, Sorel's lesson

is not as clear as it should be.

Kay expounds the theory that:

> [I]t may very well be that, in ridiculing his hero, [Sorel] is exorcising a part of himself. This might account for the fact that he considered Le Berger extravagant his most important work, in spite of the greater popularity of his earlier Francion. (p. 286)

Kay also notes that Sorel continued to attack various forms of literature in his later works and concluded that he is a "horrifying example of a writer who suddenly became a crotchety old man at the age of twenty-five" (p. 291).

Lefier, Yves. "Conversion ou récupération. Les trois Francion de Sorel, 1623-1633.", Revue de l'Université Laurentienne, 5, no. 2 (1973), pp. 25-34.

Lefier outlines the evolution in the first three editions of the Francion (1623, 1626, 1633). He discusses the format of each edition and the changes made to the text in each one. He emphasizes the importance of the préfaces and the avertissements which were constantly altered, to the expression of Sorel's intentions. In the 1623 anonymous edition, the libertine aspect is clearly visible. In 1626, the social criticism in the novel remains, but much of the sexual aspect has been removed or downplayed. In the third edition, Sorel makes his novel more of a novel and less of a satire, and even under these conditions, he feels obliged to create a pseudonym to protect himself.

Sorel declared his didactic intentions in the Avertissement of the first edition, but seems disillusioned

as to the usefulness of his endeavour because of the blindness and hypocrisy of his fellow man.

The article is an informative resume of the changes made to the Préfaces and Avertissements, in response to the changing temper of the times. However, Lefier does no more than allude to the changes in the text to which these introductions refer. In this way, the article seems less complete than its title would indicate, although the information and observations it does contain are valuable.

Leroy, Jean-Pierre. "Réflexions critiques de Sorel sur son oeuvre romanesque", XVIIe siècle, no. 105 (1974), pp. 29-47.

Leroy's article studies Sorel's own evaluation of his novels, primarily as expressed in the Bibliothèque françoise. The works discussed include the Francion, Le Berger extravagant, Cléagénor, L'Orphize, Polyandre, Le Palais d'Angélie, La Suite de la Polixene and Nouvelles françoises (and its later edition Nouvelles choisies).

Leroy's primary concern is with the paradox implied by these fictional works, since Sorel both declared himself opposed to the novel form and wrote several of them. He maintained that the short story was a superior genre to the novel, and that serious works were superior to fictional ones.

Paradoxically, of Sorel's many works, it is only the Francion, a novel, which has brought him recognition. He

realizes this in the Bibliothèque and is reticent in acknowledging the authorship of his novels, asking to be judged on the totality of his work, since this would include other genres which he considers superior, and dismissing his novels as works of his youth.

Leroy points out the weaknesses of some of the excuses Sorel used to justify his novels and notes that he was less modest about his novels than he pretends to be, since he does boast about some of their good qualities. Here again, there is a paradox, however, since Sorel is striving to make his novels as realistic as possible, but seems proud of imaginative passages he has included in them.

Leroy judges that the section in the Bibliothèque françoise is boring and repetitious, but that it is perhaps an honest expression of an author's doubts in the face of a very paradoxical situation regarding his work.

Loewe, Siegfried. "Sorels Berger extravagant als Antiroman." Diss. Wien 1971. 155 pp.

(Not consulted.)

Maillard, Jean-François. Essai sur l'esprit du héros baroque (1580-1640). Le même et l'autre. Paris: A. G. Nizet, 1973. 184 pp.

Maillard studies various aspects of the baroque hero by analysing several works, including Sorel's Histoire comique de Francion. He begins with a general outline of

information on baroque literature, proceeds through studies of baroque works from various countries, and ends his study with an analysis of the Francion (pp. 143-162). Maillard assigns the novel a special significance as the connection between the Spanish picaresque novel and the works of Scarron, Cyrano de Bergerac and even of Pascal.

Maillard defines Francion as a baroque picaresque novel. He sees the picaro as a manifestation of the baroque, because of such elements as constant movement and change and the rejection of traditional values for a new moral code. Maillard notes Francion's libertine attitudes and desire to change the moral philosophy of his time, or at least his refusal to be bound by it. He also notes Francion's refusal of possession and his générosité as important since they are in direct conflict with the bourgeois ethic, growing in importance at the time of the novel's publication.

This study as a whole is wide-ranging, draws on good examples and provides a sound basis for understanding the baroque. The chapter on the Francion is a good analysis even if one of the bases, the definition of Francion as a picaresque hero, is debatable.

Makiya, Cornelia Thompson. "Charles Sorel's Polyandre, Histoire comique: Microcosm of the noblesse de robe." Diss. University of Kentucky 1974. 246 pp.

This study of Polyandre deals with the novel's realistic presentation of French seventeenth-century society. The class on which the novel concentrates is the emerging noblesse de robe, of which most of the protagonists and the author himself, according to Makiya, are members. She traces the development of this class, its value system and differentiation from both the bourgeoisie and the noblesse d'épée, in French society and in Sorel's novel.

She also analyses the structure of the novel. There is a basic framework consisting of the central plot along with various lengthy stories which bring in outside elements. The novel is unique because it centres around the salon of a wealthy Financier rather than exterior action in varied settings.

Mayfield, Susan Newark. "The House of Games: The Fictional Works of Charles Sorel." Diss. The John Hopkins University 1975.

(Not consulted.)

Parfitt, G. A. E. "The catalogue of charms", Renaissance and Modern Studies, 17 (1973), pp. 83-94.

Parfitt deals with the imagery or motif used by poets to describe the beauty of the beloved, idealised woman in the works of various authors. Stereotyped metaphors and similies generally compare her with the sun, the moon, the

stars, some part of nature or with precious metals or gemstones.

Crispin de Passe made an engraving entitled "La Belle Charite" which shows a woman who possesses all the imagined charms in reality. Sorel used this parody as an addition to his Berger extravagant (1627) (See the Slatkine Reprint edition, p. 53). Parfitt sees this addition as a very effective expression of Sorel's burlesque of pastoralism since the image is even more effective in picture form than a word-picture could be.

Serroy, Jean. "De Florinde à Hippolyte: deux combats avec le monstre", XVIIe siècle, no. 96 (1972), pp. 21-29.

Serroy points out the similarities between an episode of Les Aventures satiriques de Florinde (1625) and Hippolyte's adventure with a monster in Racine's Phèdre (1677). Serroy discusses the differences between these baroque and classical monsters as well as the similarities in the situations and in the descriptions of the beasts.

Florinde, an anonymous work, is generally attributed to Sorel, but Serroy disputes this on the grounds that the work is not worthy of the author of Francion. He prefers to deal with the work as being by an anonymous author, so the article's primary interest for us is the discussion of the attribution of Florinde to Sorel. This novel is not nearly as complex nor is the central character as well-developed as Francion, although there are similarities between the two

works. As well, Florinde is a licentious work which appeared at almost the same time as Sorel was re-working the Francion to reduce it libertin content. Serroy also notes that Sorel omits Florinde entirely from his Bibliothèque françoise.

Serroy, Jean. "Francion et l'argent, ou L'Immoraliste et les Faux monnayeurs", XVIIe siècle, no. 105 (1974), p. 3-18.

Serroy justifies studying Francion's reaction to money in the novel, since, if we accept the novel as a reflexion of reality, the analysis of the role of money in a protagonist's life provides us with a special viewpoint for the interpretation of the work. Francion's individualism is important to this interpretation since he is always trying to escape the chains money can impose.

Francion's attitudes towards women are very similar to those he holds towards money. For example, at Raymond's party Francion advocates a world of freedom, where both money and women are shared by all men. The two factors are again linked when Serroy makes an unusual interpretation of the episode in which Francion is tricked into a sexual relationship with an older woman. Serroy states that Francion concludes that to buy sex is to sell his own freedom, to lower himself to the ways of the mercantile world (p. 12). While this idea does fit the context of Serrroy's study, it does not seem to have a basis in Sorel's text, since Francion only resolves "de n'aller plus jamais à

la proyé sans lumière" (Francion, p. 212).

When Francion has money, he spends it freely, although always in ways that do not infringe on his own liberty. When he lacks money he only feels uncomfortable because the materialistic society in which he lives tends to judge social rank by wealth. He refuses to work for money or to accept a master-servant relationship, as in the case of his engagement as a member of Clérante's household, because he does not want to allow money to control him in any way.

Serroy also discusses the incident where Francion is accused of being a counterfeiter, and relates this to both his marriage to Nays and his relationship to Emilie. Serroy attributes a symbolic meaning to Francion's vindication in court because "Francion faux monnayeur, c'est bien Francion non fidèle à lui-même" (p.16). At the same time as he is acquitted, he has given up the hypocrisy and compromise of his attempted seduction of Emilie.

Serroy, Jean. "D'un roman à métamorphoses: la composition du Francion de Charles Sorel", Baroque, no. 6 (1973), pp. 97-103.

Serroy presents a very interesting and carefully-developed argument in this article supporting the thesis that the Francion is an organized novel and not just a baroque hodge-podge of episodes. These changes in the 1626 and 1633 editions are generally attributed to external causes, but Serroy prefers to view them as an integral part

of the novel which Sorel intended to include from the time of the first edition. He notes that Sorel himself emphasized in his introductory prefaces, avertissements, etc., that he had maintained a purity of style and a sense of composition in writing the novel.

Serroy sees the novel (in its final form) as a complete work organised around two poles -- Laurette (a negative influence) and Nays (a positive one). He interprets the first episode of the novel, with Francion's inability to attain Laurette, and his discouragement as a foreshadowing of the change to come over him later in the work. Agathe only teaches him the illusion of physical pleasures and the future of Laurette's beauty. Thus, when he sees Nays' picture, she becomes the ideal of love and his courtship of her is the refusal of the deception of his former ways.

In this interpretation, with the addition of the books of the second edition, chapter 7 changes from an exultation of the libertine way of life, to the turning point in Francion's life. Even when he possesses Laurette, he sees the shallowness of her attractions and is already dreaming of Nays. On his way to meet the latter, the same Francion who exalted free love at the orgy, reconciles an almost broken marriage and encourages another. The episodes in the second part of the novel parallel those of the first part. They differ in purpose, however, in that they convince Francion to pursue his new ideal.

Thus, Serroy maintains that it was Sorel's moralising

intention from the start to bring his hero from the fleeting instability of his many love affairs, to the permanence of marriage with an 'ideal' woman. This is a very interesting and innovative interpretation of the work.

Serroy, Jean. "La vie au collège au commencement du XVIIe siècle, d'après le Francion de Sorel", Marseille, supplément au no. 88 (1972), Proc. of Conference on "Le XVIIème siècle et l'Education", pp. 153-160.

This carefully-written article discusses the presentation of college life in the Francion. Serroy judges that Sorel probably has included autobiographical material in this regard and thus can date Francion's education at the college of Lisieux as probably falling in the 1609-1616 period. He therefore explains the situation of the colleges and the University of Paris at that time, when they were suffering from the instability and poor conditions brought on by the civil war and the competition of the Jesuits in education. He also outlines the internal structure of the colleges to allow a comparison with the roles of such characters as Hortensius in the Francion. Serroy sees not only an amusing series of episodes in the relation of Francion's educational career, but also a criticism of the many faults of the system, its instructors and its methods. In fact, he notes that Sorel gives very little information on the nature of the studies Francion undertook, indicating their lack of importance or value.

Serroy also sees a link with the picaresque novel in

that:

> Tout picaro est initié à la dureté du monde par les soins d'un maître qui lui ouvre les yeux: il y a, dans la découverte que Francion fait au collège de la noirceur du monde, beaucoup de cette désillusion picaresque. (p. 157)

He also feels that Francion's constant hunger is another link to the picaresque genre.

Serroy makes the valid point that Francion's lack of discipline and dislike of the highly structured system of education are symptomatic of his attitude towards all aspects of life. Therefore, the description of his college life compliments the contents of the entire novel very well. The article is on the whole interesting and informative although it seems to deal more with the system of education than with Sorel's view of it.

Suozzo, Andrew Gilbert. "Illusion and Reality in Sorel's Francion". Diss. University of Pennsylvania 1973. xi-175 pp.

This thesis is a carefully developed argument to establish that the Francion has an internal organization, based on games of illusion and reality which occur throughout and are illustrated by both situations and characters. Francion begins as a dupe, a victim of illusions in his affair with Laurette, but gradually is more and more conscious of the reality of the situation until he can enjoy her completely lucidly at Raymond's orgy. He then becomes a master of deception, and in the second half of the work,

applies his new-found knowledge to Nays. She gradually achieves the same level of lucidity as Francion, proceeding from a romantic conception of their love to a lucid and pragmatic decision to marry the philandering French nobleman. Thus, Suozzo maintains the expansion of the work in the 1626 and 1633 editions was necessary to bring full unity and balance to the novel.

The author explores the role of minor plots and minor characters and analyses many episodes fully. He deals with disguises and madness as two aspects of illusion, as well as the differentiation of Francion and the other characters in the novel.

The study includes many interesting observations and is well-documented.

N.B. See also a reference among the "Works in progress" to current research by this author.

Tiessen, Sigrun. Das Problem der Literarischen Fiktion im 17. Jarhundert aus der Sicht Sorels. Mücher romanische Arbeiten, 45. Munich: Fink, 1976.

(Not consulted.)

Verdier, Gabrielle Marie. "The Art of the Nouvelle in Early Seventeenth Century France: Charles Sorel". Diss. Yale University 1976.

(Not consulted.)

Weber, Alison Parks. "Four Types of Picaresque Fiction". Diss. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign 1975.

(Not consulted.)

Works in Progress

As additional information, we include the following list of works in progress which we have encountered in the course of our studies:

Chouinard, Daniel. "Le Berger extravagant de Charles Sorel; l'anti-roman comme poétique du roman." Doctoral dissertation in progress (J. Goldin, Montreal).

Greenberg, Karen Sue. "Meditation and Madness: Charles Sorel's Berger extravagant. Doctoral dissertation in progress (P. Lewis, Cornell).

Hilson, Danielle. "Ambivalence and Neurosis: A Study of Charles Sorel's La Vraie Histoire Comique de Francion" Doctoral dissertation in progress (R. J. Nelson, Illinois-Urbana).

Hodgson, Richard. "Poétique et pratique du roman dans l'oeuvre de Charles Sorel" Doctoral dissertation in progress (D. Jourlait, Toronto).

Minguez, Francine. "Roman et théâtricalité: les voix romanesques dans le Francion de Sorel." Doctoral dissertation in progress (University of Montreal).

Suozzo, Andrew Gilbert. "The Comic Novels of Sorel (a study of structure and technique)." Article in progress.

Tennbaum, Kosine. "Portraits parallèles dans les romans comiques de Charles Sorel." Doctoral dissertation in progress (G. B. Daniel, North Carolina).

Chapter 10

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Works by Sorel Which Were Consulted

Le Berger extravagant. Précédé d'une introduction de Hervé D. Bechade. Paris, 1627; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1972.

"A Critical Edition of La Bibliothèque Françoise of Charles Sorel." Edited by Myron L. Kocher. Diss. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill 1965.

La Bibliothèque françoise. Seconde édition revue et augmentée. Paris, 1667; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1970.

La Comedie de Chansons. Paris, 1640; rpt. in Ancien théâtre français. Paris: P. Jannet, 1856, vol. 9, p. 99-229.

Le Commerce des nouvelles restably, ou Le Courrier arresté par la Gazette. Paris: n.p., 1649.

De la Confusion et des erreurs des sciences et des moyens d'y remedier. Discours tiré de la Science Universelle. Paris: Toussainct Quinet, 1641.

Le Courrier Plaisant, apportant de Plaisantes Nouvelles Dédiées aux curieux. Paris: veuve J. Remy, 1649.

Description de l'Isle de portraiture et de la ville de Portraits. Paris, 1659; rpt. in Charles Garnier. Voyages imaginaires, songes, visions, et romans cabalistiques. Paris: Garnier, 1787-1789, v. 26, pp. 337-400.

Discours sur la Jonction des mers. n.p. n.d. [Paris, 1664].

Epithalme sur l'Heureux mariage du tres-chrestien Roy de France & de Navarre Louys XIII. de ce nom, avec Madame Anne d'Austriche, fille du Catholique Roy d'Espagne. Paris: E. Richer, 1616.

Grand bal de la douairiere de Billebabault. Ballet dansé par le Roy au mois de Fevrier 1626. Collective work of René Bordier, [Claude l'Estoile, Imbert, Sorel, T. R.]. Paris: Imprimerie du Louvre, 1626. (Microfilm by University Microfilms Limited, Fletcher Bibliography no. 10, Microfilm Order D7, Richardson Collection, Royal Academy of Dancing, reel no. 1.)

La Vraie Histoire Comique de Francion. nouvelle édition, avec avant-propos et notes par Emile Colombey. Paris: A. Delahays, 1858.

La Jeunesse de Francion: texte de 1626. Introduction et notes par André Thérive. Paris: Bossard, 1922.

L'Histoire comique de Francion; En laquelle sont découvertes les plus subtiles finesses et trompeuses inventions tant des hommes que des femmes de toutes sortes de conditions et d'âges. Non moins profitable pour s'en garder, que plaisantes à la lecture. Nouvelle édition conforme à l'édition princeps de 1623, et ornée de 17 eaux-fortes et de 16 compositions par Martin Van Maele. Paris: Jean Fort, 1925.

L'Histoire comique de Francion, in Antoine Adam, ed. Romanciers du XVIIe siècle. Sorel-Scarron-Furetière-Madame de la Fayette. Textes présentés et annotés par Antoine Adam. Paris: Gallimard, 1958.

Le Jugement du Cid. n.p. [1637]; rpt. in Armand Gasté, La querelle du Cid. Paris, 1898; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1970, pp. 230-240.

La Louange et l'utilité des bottes par le chevalier Rozandre. Paris: R. Daufresne, 1622.

"A Critical Edition of La Maison des jeux of Charles Sorel (1657)". Edited by Daniel Anthony Gadja. Diss. University of California, Irvine 1973.

"Les Nouvelles admirables par Charles Sorel, sieur de Souvigny (1602- 1674)", présentées par Elie-Charles Flamand in "Textes", La Nouvelle Revue Française, année 9, no. 97 (1961), pp. 186-192.

Les Nouvelles françaises où se trouvent divers effets de l'amour et de la fortune. Paris, 1623; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1972.

Polyandre, Histoire comique. Paris, 1648; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1972.

Role des presentations faictes au Grand Jour de l'eloquence françoise. n.p., 13 mars 1634; rpt. in Variétés historiques et littéraires. Recueil de pièces volantes rares et curieuses en prose et en vers. revues et annotées par M. Edouard Fournier. Paris: P. Jannet, 1855, vol. 1, pp. 127-140.

La Science de l'Histoire avec le Jugement des Principaux Historiens tant Anciens que Modernes. Paris: T. Jolly, 1665.

Criticism of 'L'Histoire comique de Francion' Consulted

Adam, Antoine. Introduction to Romanciers du XVIIe siècle. Sorel-Scarron- Furetière-Madame de la Fayette. Textes présentés et annotés par Antoine Adam. Paris: Gallimard, 1958.

Battista, P. "Attualità del Francion", Le Lingue Straniere, 14, no. 5 (1965), pp. 14-26.

Blanzat, Jean. "Deux romans-sources", Monde nouveau, Jan. 1956, pp. 94-96.

Bogliolo, Giovanni. "L'elemento satirico nel Francion di Sorel", in Studi in Onore Arturo Massolo, Studi Urbinati, anno 41, new series B, no. 1-2 (1967), t. 2, pp. 1005-1011.

Bugliani, Ivanna. "L'elemento comico nel Francion", Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, ser. 2, vol. 35, fasc. 1-2 (1966), pp. 27-55.

----------. "Francion eroe libertino", Saggi e ricerche di letteratura francese, 7 (1966), p. 9-68.

Cazenave, Gil. "L'image du Prince dans les premiers romans de Charles Sorel", XVIIe siècle, no. 105 (1974), pp. 19-28.

Colombey, Emile. "Avant-propos" to Sorel. La Vraie Histoire comique de Francion. Nouvelle édition, avec avant-propos et notes par E. Colombey. Paris: A. Delahays, 1858, pp. 1-10.

Cramer, Hazel. "The Role of the Reader: A Study of Five Early Seventeenth Century Novels." Diss. Cornell University 1976.

Freudmann, Felix R. "La Recherche passionnée du Francion", Symposium, 21, no. 2 (1967), pp. 101-117.

Garavini, Fausta. "Francion rivisitado: diacronia d'una struttura", Saggi e ricerche de letteratura francese, 14, pp. 39-107.

Griffiths, Michael and Wolfgang Leiner. "Some Thoughts on the names of the characters in Sorel's Histoire comique de Francion", Romance Notes, 15, no. 3 (1974), pp. 445-453.

Guthrie, J. Richard, Jr. "An Analysis of style and purpose in the first episode of the Histoire comique de Francion, Romance Notes, 15, no. 1 (1973), pp. 99-103.

Lachèvre, Frédéric. "Pierre Louÿs et l'histoire littéraire, Charles Sorel et le roman 'Francion', 1623", Mercure de France, 15 janvier, 1926, pp. 370-383.

Lefier, Yves. "Conversion ou récupération. Les trois Francion de Sorel, 1623-1633", Revue de l'Université Laurentienne, 5, no. 2 (1973), pp. 25-34.

Lough, J. "Another Copy of the First Edition of Sorel's Francion", French Studies, 20, no. 2 (1966), pp. 121-122, with plate.

Magne, Emile. "Revue de la Quinzaine", Mercure de France, 15 février, 1926, pp. 165-166.

Meyer, G. "Le Francion de Sorel (1622) [sic], et la comédie de Molière", Les Humanités (Classes de lettres, sections modernes), March 1966, pp. 24-25.

Minář, Jaroslav. "De Francion à Gil Blas", Philologica Pragensia, 9, no. 4 (1966), pp. 364-374.

Serroy, Jean. "Francion et l'argent, ou L'Immoraliste et les Faux Monnayeurs", XVIIe siècle, no. 105 (1974), p. 3-18.

----------. "D'un roman à métamorphoses: la composition du Francion de Charles Sorel", Baroque, no. 6 (1973), pp. 97-103.

----------. "La vie au collège au commencement du XVIIe siècle, d'après le Francion de Sorel", Marseille, supplément au no. 88 (1972), Proc. of Conference on "Le XVIIème siècle et l'Education", pp. 153-160.

Sétaro, Giuseppe. "Francion dans la vie et dans l'oeuvre de Charles Sorel", Revue des Langues Vivantes, 28, no. 2 (1962), pp. 134-148.

Suozzo, Andrew Gilbert. "Illusion and Reality in Sorel's Francion." Diss. University of Pennsylvania 1973.

Sutcliffe, F. E. "Le réel dans le Francion de Sorel [résumé de communication]", Le Réel dans la littérature, Actes du Xe Congrès de la Fédération internationale des langues et littératures modernes, Strasbourg, 29 août-3 septembre, 1966, publiés par Paul Vernois. Paris: C. Klincksieck, 1967, p. 207.

Other References Consulted Concerning Sorel and His Works

Arbour, Romeo. "Langage et société dans les Nouvelles Françoises de Charles Sorel", Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa, 41, no. 2 (1971), pp. 169-191.

Baldensperger, F. "Les burlesques: Sorel, Furetière, Scarron", Revue des cours et conférences, 21, April 5, 1912-1913, pp. 741-749.

Barko, Ivan. "Une source du Dom Juan de Molière: le Polyphile de Sorel?", Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France. 74e année, no. 3 (1974), pp. 469-474.

Barrouz, Robert. "Sorel (Charles)", in Georges Grente, ed. Dictionnaire des lettres françaises. Paris: A. Fayard, 1954, vol. 3, le dix-septième siècle, pp. 957-960.

Berens, Robert Lawrence. "Aspects of Literary Satire in Sorel, Scarron and Furetière". Diss. University of Colorado 1966.

Croiset, Maurice. La République de Platon, étude et analyse par Maurice Croiset. Paris: Mellottée, 1946.

Etiemble, René. "Un écrivain généreux: Charles Sorel", Hygiène des lettres, V: C'est le Bouquet. Paris: Gallimard, 1967, pp. 23-35.

Franchetti, Anna Lia. "Il 'Berger extravagant' o l'inganno della rappresentazione", Paragone, anno 27, numero 318 (1976), pp. 45-68.

Garavini, Fausta. "La Casa dei giochi", Paragone, anno 26, no. 3 (1975), pp. 3-47.

Godenne, R. "Les débuts de la nouvelle narrée à la première personne, 1685-1800", Romanische Forschungen, 82 b., h. 3 (1970), pp. 253-267.

----------. "Pour une histoire de la nouvelle française aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles", L'Information littéraire, 23rd year, no. 2 (1971), pp. 66-67.

Hamel, Marcelle. "Un critique de Montaigne au XVIIe siècle: Charles Sorel", Bulletin de la Société des amis de Montaigne, series 3, no. 31 (1964), p. 44-50.

Henriot, Emile. "Charles Sorel", Les Livres du second rayon: irréguliers et libertins. Paris: B. Grasset, 1926, pp. 71-78.

Hubert, M. J. D. "Les Nouvelles françaises de Sorel et de Segrais", in Cahiers de l'Association internationale des études françaises, no. 18 (1966), pp. 31-40.

Judrin, Roger. "Charles Sorel", Nouvelle Revue Française, 128 (1963), pp. 291-295.

Kay, Burf. "A writer turns against literature: Charles Sorel's Le Berger extravagant", Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa, no. 43 (1973), pp. 277-291.

Knystautas, Beverly Sue. "Charles Sorel: An Inventory, Etat Présent, and Appraisal", Diss. University of Connecticut 1973.

Kocher, Myron L. "Charles Sorel and the Drama", Furman Studies, 21, no. 4, pp. 34-36.

Leiner, W. "[Review of] J. R. Guthrie Jr., 'An Analysis of Style and Purpose in the First Episode of the 'Histoire comique de Francion'", Romance Notes , Studi francesi, nuova serie, anno 18, fasc. 11, no. 53 (1974), pp. 335-336.

Lefranc, Abel. "Le Berger Extravagant, Francion, et Polyandre, de Charles Sorel", Revue des cours et conferences, 1906.

Leroy, Jean-Pierre. "La littérature médiévale dans la Bibliothèque française de Charles Sorel", La Société française de littérature comparée, Actes du septième congrès, Moyen âge et littérature comparée, Poitiers, 27-29 mai, 1965. Paris: Didier, 1967, pp. 103-112.

----------. "Réflexions critiques de Sorel sur son oeuvre romanesque", XVIIe siècle, no. 105 (1974), pp. 29-47.

Makiya, Cornelia Thompson. "Charles Sorel's Polyandre, Histoire comique: Microcosm of the noblesse de robe ". Diss. University of Kentucky 1974.

Mayfield, Susan Newark. "The House of Games: The Fictional Works of Charles Sorel". Diss. The John Hopkins University 1975.

Nicolet, M. "La Condition de l'homme de lettres au XVIIe siècle à travers l'oeuvre de deux contemporains: Charles Sorel et A. Furetière", Revue d'histoire littérare de la France, 63e année, no. 3 (1963), pp. 369-393.

Roy, Emile. La Vie et les oeuvres de Charles Sorel, Sieur de Souvigny (1602-1674). Paris, 1891; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1970.

Serroy, Jean. "De Florinde à Hippolyte: deux combats avec le monstre", XVIIe siècle, no. 96 (1972), pp. 21-29.

Sutcliffe, F.-E. Le Réalisme de Charles Sorel: Problèmes humains du XVIIe siècle. Paris: Nizet, 1965.

Tilton, Elizabeth Meier. "Concept and Technique in the Anti-Novels of Charles Sorel". Diss. Yale University 1970.

Other References Consulted

Adam, Antoine. Histoire de la littérature française au dix-septième siècle. 5 vols. Paris: del Duca, 1962-1968.

----------. Les Libertins au XVIIe siècle. Paris: Buchet-Chastel, 1964.

----------. Romanciers du XVIIe siècle. Sorel-Scarron-Furetière-Madame de la Fayette. Textes présentés et annotés par Antoine Adam. Paris: Gallimard, 1958.

----------. Théophile de Viau et la libre pensée française en 1620. n.p. n.d.; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, n.d.

Bailbé, Jacques. "Le thème de la vieille femme dans la poésie satirique du seizième et du début du dix-septième siècles," Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance, Travaux et documents 26 (1964), pp. 98-119.

Bar, Francis. Le Genre Burlesque en France au XVIIe siècle, Etude de style. Paris: d'Artrey, 1960.

Bée, Michel. "La société traditionnelle et la mort", XVIIe siècle, no. 106-107 (1975), pp. 81-111.

La Sainte Bible, ou l'Ancien et Nouveau Testament d'après la version revue par J. F. Ostervald. London: Guillaume Watts, 1845.

Borgerhoff, E. B. O. The Freedom of French Classicism. Princeton Publications in Modern Languages, no. 9. Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1950.

Bosanquet, Bernard. The Education of the Young in The Republic of Plato. Translated into English with notes and introduction. Cambridge: University Press, 1932.

Brunschvicg, Léon. Descartes et Pascal, Lecteurs de Montaigne. Neuchâtel: Editions de la Baconnière, 1945.

Bulfinch, Thomas. Bulfinch's Mythology, The Age of Fable, The Age of Chivalry, Legends of Charlemagne. New York: Random, n.d.

Centre International de Synthèse. Pierre Gassendi, 1592-1655. Sa vie et son oeuvre. Paris: Albin Michel, 1955.

Charbonnel, J.-Roger. La Pensée italienne au XVIe siècle et le courant libertin. Paris, 1919; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1969.

Charron, Jean Daniel. The "Wisdom" of Pierre Charron: An Original and Unorthodox Code of Morality. University of North Carolina Studies in the Romance Languages, Number 34. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1961.

Cioranescu, Alexandre. Bibliographie de la littérature française du dix-septième siècle. Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1966, vol. 3, pp. 1871-1874.

Collinet, Jean-Pierre and Jean Serroy, eds. Romanciers et Conteurs du XVIIe siècle. Paris: Ophyrs, 1975.

Descartes, René. Les Méditations métaphysiques avec une introduction, des notes et un appendice par Emile Thouverez. Paris: Librairie Classique Eugène Belin, 1899.

Desjardins, Albert. Les Sentiments Moraux au XVIe siècle. Paris, 1887; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1969.

Dulong, Claude. L'amour au XVIIe siècle. Paris: Hachette, 1969.

Esternod, Claude d'. L'Espadon Satyrique de Claude D'Esternod première édition critique d'après l'édition originale de 1619 avec une préface, une bibliographie, un glossaire, des variantes et des notes par Fernand Fleuret et Louis Perceau. 1619; rpt. Paris: Librairie du bon vieux temps, 1922.

Fournel, Victor. La Littérature indépendante et les écrivains oubliés; Essais de critique et d'érudition sur le XVIIe siècle. Paris, 1862; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1968.

Gaiffe, Félix. L'envers du grand siècle; Etude historique et anecdotique. Paris: Albin Michel, 1924.

Gasté, Armand. La Querelle du Cid, Pièces et Pamphlets publiés d'après les originaux avec une introduction. Paris, 1898; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1970.

Green, Frederick C. "The Critic of the Seventeenth Century and his attitude toward the French Novel", Modern Philology, 24 (1926-1927), pp. 285-295.

Grimal, P., ed. Mythologies classiques. Paris: Larousse, 1963.

Hainsworth, G. "Variétés; Quelques opinions françaises (1614-1664) sur les Nouvelles exemplaires de Cervantes", Bulletin hispanique, 32, 52e année (1963), pp. 63-70.

Herr, R. "Honor versus Absolutism: Richelieu's Fight Against Dueling", Journal of Modern History, 23 (1955) pp. 281-285.

Horace. The Odes of Horace with Five Prefacing Epodes. translated in their original meters by Margaret Ralston Gest. Miriam M. Thrall, ed. Kutztown, Pennsylvania: Kutztown Publishing, 1973.

Jump, John D. Burlesque. London: Methuen, 1972.

Lacroix, Paul. XVIIe siècle; Institutions, Usages et costumes, France 1590-1700. Ouvrage illustré de 16 chromolithographies et de 300 gravures sur bois (Dont 20 tirées hors texte) d'après les monuments et l'art de l'époque. 3rd ed. Paris: Librairie de Firmin-Didot et Cie, 1891.

LeBreton, André. Le Roman au dix-septième siècle. 2nd ed. Paris: Hachette, 1912.

Lough, J. An Introduction to Seventeenth Century France. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1954.

Magne, Emile. Les Plaisirs et les fêtes en France au XVIIe siècle. Geneva: Editions de la Frégate, 1944.

Maillard, Jean-François. Essai sur l'esprit du héros baroque (1580-1640). Le même et l'autre. Paris: A. G. Nizet, 1973.

Margolin, Jean-Claude. "Des Lunettes et des hommes ou la satire des mal-voyants au XVIe siècle", Annales, 30, no. 2-3 (1975), pp. 375-390.

Michaud. Biographie universelle, ancienne et moderne. Paris, 1854- ; Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck-u. Verlagsunstalt, 1966- .

Montaigne, Michel de. Essais. Nouvelle édition conforme au texte de l'exemplaire de Bordeaux, avec les additions de l'édition posthume, les principales variantes, une introduction, des notes et un index, par Maurice Rat. 3 vols. Paris: Garnier, 1941-1942.

Morillot, Paul. Le roman français durant l'époque classique 1610-1800. London and Toronto: S. M. Dent and Sons; Paris: J. M. Dent et fils; New York: E. P. Dutton, 1921.

Niceron, le R. P. Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des hommes illustres dans la republique des lettres. Avec un catalogue raisonné de leurs ouvrages. Paris, 1735; Farnborough, Hants, England: Gregg International Publishers, 1969, vol. XXXI.

Pabst, Walter. "Funktionen des Traumes in der französischen Literatur des 17.Jharhunderts", Zeitschrift für französischen Sprache und Literatur, 66 (1956), pp. 154-174.

Parfitt, G. A. E. "The catalogue of charms", Renaissance and Modern Studies, 17 (1973), pp. 83-94.

Pascal, Blaise. Pensées. texte de l'édition Brunschvicg. Edition précédée de la vie de Pascal par Mme Périer, sa soeur. Introduction et notes par Ch.-M. des Granges. Paris: Garnier, 1964.

Pintard, René. Le libertinage érudit dans la première moitié du XVIIe siècle. Paris: Boivin, 1943.

Reynier, Gustave. Le Roman réaliste au XVIIe siècle. Paris, 1914; Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1971.

Rousset, Jean. La Littérature de l'âge baroque en France. Circé et le Paon. nouvelle édition. Paris: Librairie José Corti, 1954.

Simpson, Joyce G. La Tasse et la littérature et l'art baroque en France. Paris: A. G. Nizet, 1962.

Skornia, H. J. "Charles Sorel as a Precursor of Realism", PMLA, 56 (1941), pp. 379-394.

Spink, J. S. French Free-Thought from Gassessendi to Voltaire. London: University of London, The Athlone Press, 1960.

Strodach, George K. The Philosophy of Epicurus: Letters, doctrines, and parallel passages from Lucretius; translated with commentary and an introductory essay on ancient materialism. n.p.: Northwestern University Press, 1963.

Chronological Listing of Editions of "L'Histoire comique de Francion"

Histoire comique de Francion. Paris: Pierre Billaine, 1623. 539 p.

Histoire comique de Francion, en laquelle sont descouvertes les plus subtiles finesses et trompeuses inventions, tant des hommes que des femmes de toutes sortes de conditions et d'aages. Non moins profitables pour s'en garder que plaisante à la lecture. Paris: n.p., 1623. 3 vols., 886 p.

Histoire comique de Francion. n.p.: n.p., 1624.

L'Histoire comique de Francion, où les tromperies, les subtilitez, les mauvais humeurs, les sottises et tous les autres vices de quelques personnes de ce siècle sont naïfvement représentées. Seconde édition, reveue et augmentée de beaucoup. Paris: n.p., 1626. 900 p.

L'histoire comique de Francion,. n.p: n.p., 1628.

L'histoire comique de Francion. Nouvelle édition, reveue et augmentée de beaucoup. Paris: n.p., 1630. xxiv-872 p.

La vraye histoire comique de Francion. Composée par Nicolas de Moulinet, sieur du Parc, gentilhomme lorrain. Amplifiée en plusieurs endroicts et augmentée d'un livre suivant les manuscripts de l'autheur. Paris: n.p., 1633. xx-1040 p.

La vraye histoire comique de Francion, composée par Nicolas de Moulinet, sieur du Parc. Amplifiée en plusieurs endroicts et augmentée du XIIe livre. Paris: J. Jarquin, 1641. 962 p.

Gillet de la Tessonnerie adapted Francion for the stage in 1642.

Moulinet, Nicolas de, Sieur du Parc. The Comical History of Francion, wherin the variety of vices that abuse the ages are satyrically limn'd in the native colours . . . Done into English by a person of honor. London: n.p., 1655.

La vraye histoire comique de Francion . . . Amplifiée . . . & augmentée d'un livre . . . Rouen, Paris: n.p., 1663.

La vraye histoire comique de Francion. Revuë et corrigée par N. Duez . . . Leyde & Rotterdam: n.p., 1668. 2 vols.

La Vraye histoire comique de Francion, composée par N. de Moulinet, sieur Du Parc . . . Leyde: H. Drummond, 1685. 2 vols.

The Comical History of Francion . . . Translated by several hands and adapted to the humour of the present age. London: For R. Wellington, 1703.

La vraye histoire comique de Francion, composée par Nicolas de Moulinet, sieur du Parc. Leyde: H. Drummond, 1721. 2 vols.

The Comical History of Francion The second edition, very much corrected, and adorn'd with cuts. London: Printed for M. Poulson and sold by J. Darby, etc., 1727. 2 vols.

La Vraie Histoire Comique de Francion. nouvelle édition, avec avant-propos et notes par Emile Colombey. Paris: A. Delahays, 1858. 539 p.

La Vraie histoire comique de Francion. Paris: Garnier, 1909. 527 p.

La Jeunesse de Francion. Introduction et notes by André Thérive. Paris: Editions Bossard, 1922. 267 p.

Histoire comique de Francion, réimprimée sur l'exemplaire unique de l'édition originale (1623) et sur les éditions de 1626 et 1633 et précédé d'une introduction par Emile Roy. Paris: Hachette, 1924-1931. 4 vols.

L'Histoire Comique de Francion, En laquelle sont découvertes les plus subtiles finesses et trompeuses inventions tant des hommes que des femmes de toutes sortes de conditions et d'âges. Non moins profitable pour s'en garder, que plaisante à la lecture. Nouvelle édition conforme à l'édition princeps de 1623, et ornée de 17 eaux-fortes et de 16 compositions par Martin Van Maele. Paris: J. Fort, 1925. vi-411 p.

Histoire comique de Francion, contenant les 11 gravures de l'édition de 1685, présentée et annotée par Elisabeth Hausser. n.p.: Club français du livre, 1965.

L'Histoire comique de Francion, in Antoine Adam. Romanciers du XVIIe siècle. Sorel-Scarron-Furetière-Madame de la Fayette. Textes présentés et annotés par Antoine Adam. Paris: Gallimard, 1958.